





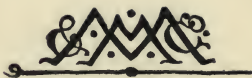








THE SHORTER POEMS  
OF  
FREDERICK TENNYSON



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TORONTO







FREDERICK TENNYSON.

# THE SHORTER POEMS

OF

# FREDERICK TENNYSON

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

CHARLES TENNYSON



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## INTRODUCTION

THIS selection from the Shorter Poems of Frederick Tennyson requires but a very few words of introduction. The poems may speak for themselves, and as to the poet,<sup>1</sup> his life, though it outlasted three generations of men, was passed in such quietude and seclusion, that no chronicle, however intimate, could well exceed a very modest sum of pages.

Something, however, is necessary to shew how the poems which are included in the volume have come to assume their present shape, and to give some picture of the poet, who is known to most readers only through his relationship to a more illustrious singer, and by the four short and not very representative examples of his verse which have found their way into the second series of Palgrave's *Golden Treasury*.

Frederick Tennyson was born at Somersby

<sup>1</sup> For a further Memoir of Frederick Tennyson's life see "Tennyson and His Brothers," by the present writer, Chapter III. of *Tennyson and His Friends*. Macmillan & Co., 1911.

Rectory in 1807, two years before his greater brother Alfred, and a year before Charles, the third poet of this remarkable fraternity. Coming into the world within so short a time of one another and living in so secluded a place as the little hamlet of Somersby, the three brothers were naturally thrown much together. All three received their earliest education from their father, a man of scholarly and original mind, and later went together to the Grammar School in the neighbouring town of Louth. The childhood of the Rector's large family seems, in spite of the moods of depression which too often clouded Dr. Tennyson's variable temper, to have been a happy and united one. There are many letters and fragmentary verses which shew that down to the last years of his long life, spent for the most part many hundreds of miles from his home and family, Frederick's mind was constantly reverting to those early years, and none of his poems are inspired with a more genuine feeling than those which, like the lines on "A Heliograph" (see *post*, p. 1) and the sonnet printed on p. 208 of this book, were dedicated to the memory of his mother.

Life at the Louth School was less happy, but Frederick, who had already begun to shew promise of scholarship, soon parted from his two younger brothers to complete his education at Eton. Eton was at this time

under the harsh but potent rule of Dr. Keate, and Frederick's scholastic abilities rapidly developed. In spite of a moodiness and shyness of disposition and a contempt of authority which had already begun to make him a solitary and rebellious spirit, he became a keen and distinguished cricketer, and rose to be "Captain of the Oppidans" before the time came for him to pass from Eton to Cambridge.

Charles and Alfred, after leaving the school at Louth, had been reading with their father, and the quiet days in the Rectory garden and upon the broad wolds and interminable shores of Lincolnshire had given them abundant leisure to cultivate their passion for poetry and natural beauty. Frederick, too, in spite of the distractions of school life, found time to follow their example, and the *Poems by Two Brothers* which appeared in 1827 contained at least four poems from his hand. His writing, however, to judge by these examples, was still too strongly under the influence of Byron (the common object of the brothers' adoration) to be very characteristic, and although one poem, "The Oak of the North," shews a wonderful command of language and rhythm for a boy of his age, there is as yet little trace of the broad, sometimes rather florid, but always intensely individual style which marked his later work.

In the same year he was entered at St. John's, and twelve months later migrated to Trinity, where his two brothers immediately joined him. His career at Cambridge was distinguished by his conquest of the Browne medal, which he won with a Greek ode in sapphics on "Egypt."<sup>1</sup> This, however, was his only Academic achievement, and he does not seem to have made nearly so strong an impression on the men of his time as did his two younger brothers. For this, no doubt, his shy and unsocial temper was largely responsible, for his scholarship and athletic gifts gave him the advantage over his brothers, who came to the University less used to society and totally unknown, while, although he was fair and not so tall as Charles and Alfred, he had like them the fine head and great physical strength of the Tennyson family. It had been arranged that, according to the wish of his grandfather, Frederick should take Holy Orders on leaving Cambridge. His own views, however, were already much too unconventional to make the project a congenial one, and, fortunately, the opportune inheritance of a small estate in Grimsby freed him from the necessity of earning his own living. Under the circumstances, he had little difficulty in evading the career for which he felt himself unsuited,

<sup>1</sup> See *Prolusiones Academicæ*, 1828-47.



and he was soon free to look about him for a more congenial occupation. It must have been about this time that Frederick made what was destined to be one of the few great friendships of his life—with Edward FitzGerald. FitzGerald, who was two years his junior, had been at Cambridge with him, but the two do not seem to have succeeded in making acquaintance till after Frederick had gone down. Now they spent some time together in London making and talking music, spouting poetry, and going on coaching expeditions into the neighbouring counties. Long afterwards, when Frederick had gone to live out of England, FitzGerald, with whom he maintained for years a regular correspondence, is constantly referring to the jolly, tempestuous, laughing, bickering days which they spent together at this time. He sighs for Frederick's "Englishman's humours," for their old quarrels — "I mean 'quarrels' in the sense of a good strenuous difference of opinion, supported on either side by occasional outbursts of spleen. . . . Come and let us try," he adds; "you used to irritate my vegetable blood." But their friendship was built on deeper foundations than this. "It is because there are so few F. Tennysons in the world," writes "Fitz" to his friend in Italy, "that I do not like to be wholly out of hearing of the one I know. . . . I see so

many little natures that I needs must draw to the large."

It was no doubt something in this breadth of nature and in his devotion to the old literatures of Greece and Rome that made Fitzgerald think of Frederick as a being born for the South. At any rate, it is certain that the attraction was a powerful one, so powerful indeed that it soon became and continued the dominating factor of the poet's life. Within a very few years after the end of his Cambridge career Frederick left England for the Mediterranean. He was passionately fond of travel, "which," he used to say with the large simplicity that was so characteristic of him, "makes pleasure solemn and pain sweet," and for some years he roamed the length and breadth of Italy, writing from time to time to his friend Fitz "accounts of Italy, finer than any I ever heard," but in spite of his enthusiasm for his adopted country, still remaining at heart the boyish, laughter-loving, choleric Englishman who had won Fitzgerald's friendship. At one time we hear of him playing cricket against the crew of the *Bellerophon* on the Parthenopæan Hills and "sacking the sailors by 90 runs," at another Fitz pictures him "laughing and singing and riding into Naples with huge self-supplying beakers full of the warm South. . . . I like that such men as Frederick

should be abroad," he adds, "so strong, haughty and passionate."

In 1839 Frederick married an Italian lady, daughter of the Chief Magistrate of Siena, and eventually he settled down to live at Florence. All this time he had been working away at poetry. In 1850 Fitz writes urging him to publish. "You are now the only man I expect verse from, such gloomy, grand stuff as you write . . . we want some bits of strong, genuine imagination. There are heaps of single lines, couplets and stanzas that would consume the ——s and ——s like stubble." The Brownings, too, whose acquaintance he first made in 1852, though they had been in Florence, with one interval, since 1847, encouraged him in the same direction. Early in 1853 he had a collection of his verse privately printed, and from this he read aloud to his new friends. Mrs. Browning writes of the verses: "They are full of imagery and encompassed with poetical atmosphere and very melodious. On the other hand, there is a vagueness and too much personification. It's the smell of a rose rather than a rose—very sweet notwithstanding." The poet she finds even better than the poems. "So truthful, so direct, such a reliable Christian man . . . we quite love him. What Swedenborg calls 'selfhood' the *proprium* is not in him." And again: "He has much of the poetic tempera-

ment about him, a dreamy, speculative, shy man, reminding us of his brother in many respects, good and pure-minded." It was not long before he became "one of our very favourite friends."

Robert Browning too has left us an impression of the poet at this time which is preserved by Sir Frederick Wedmore in his recent volume of *Memories*. Frederick, he said, seemed to possess all the qualities of his brother Alfred, but in solution. One always expected them to crystallize—but they never did. From these accounts it would seem that the poet, losing the buoyancy of youth, was becoming more and more dominated by the nervous and introspective tendency which had been so marked in him even as a schoolboy. His own letters shew that he saw very little society at this time. It was five years before he made the acquaintance of the Brownings in Florence, and, with the exception of tremendous Caroline Norton and her son Brinsley, of whom he has left an amusing account in his letters, Adelaide Kemble, grown stout but still melodious, Edward Lytton (Owen Meredith), then staying in the city as secretary to his relative Lord Dalling, and one or two other people whom he met at the Brownings, he does not seem to have made many acquaintances. In 1854 he visited London, taking with him his privately printed

book of poems, and in the same year a volume of selections was published by John W. Parker & Sons under the title of *Days and Hours*. As was only to be expected, having regard to the author's connection with an already famous name, the book came in for a good deal of unfavourable criticism and comparison, and in spite of a very appreciative notice from Charles Kingsley, the poet seems to have been not a little depressed by its reception. Probably he himself felt some diffidence in putting forward his own work under the name of Tennyson, and this diffidence coupled with his growing devotion to abstract studies and the diffuseness of mind upon which both Mr. and Mrs. Browning commented, combined to keep him silent for nearly forty years. Something too must be attributed to an interest, amounting indeed almost to obsession, which, first gaining hold on him at this time, grew so much in power that it was able to dominate his mind until almost the close of his life.

Florentine society was during the years of his residence beginning to be deeply interested in the phenomena of spiritualism which had lately sprung into such prominence. The Brownings of course were among the keenest students of the new discoveries, and a letter of Mrs. Browning's describes an evening at Lytton's villa at Bellosguardo, when the

subject was much discussed by a large company including Frederick Tennyson. That Frederick did not at first take the new science very seriously is shewn by a letter of 1852, in which he wrote to Alfred of the "Unfortunate Ghosts" who "either drivel like schoolgirls or bounce out at once into the most shameful falsehoods." And in another letter of the same time he speaks contemptuously enough of "Owen the Socialist and a host of infidels" who, "by a peculiar logical process of their own, after seeing a table in motion, instantly believe in the immortality of the soul." This, however, was in the early days of his friendship with the Brownings. There is little doubt that before he left Florence these new ideas had taken a firm hold on his mind. Another influence which began to gain a simultaneous ascendancy over him was that of Swedenborg, and this too he probably owed in some degree to Mrs. Browning's example, and also to the conversation of Powers the sculptor, who was living in Florence at the time, and was also a devotee of the same strange genius. Frederick himself, in spite of a determined antagonism to the leading sects of the Christian Church (he loved to inveigh against "the frowzy diatribes of black men with white ties—too often the only white thing about them"), was at heart of a profoundly religious and mystical temperament.

He hated materialism or agnosticism in any form, and craved for some creed which might express and justify his unshakable belief in the immortality of the soul and the existence of an omnipotent moral law. Such a creed he was able to find in the works of Swedenborg, and the phenomena of the spiritualists seemed to fall naturally into place as illustrations and evidence of the master's doctrine. Indeed so convinced did he become of the truth of these revelations that he grew to believe that he himself held communication with the spirits of the departed by means of a kind of electrical ticking which he often heard in his room at night, and at one time he used actually to execute automatic writing at the dictation of these same communicants. Although, however, he did not cease to believe in the reality of the communication, the results were so lamentably trivial that he soon abandoned the practice of the science and confined himself to its theoretical aspect. This development occupied many years, but it had probably made considerable advance by the time he left Florence, and, after a few months spent at Pisa and Genoa, settled in Jersey, where he was to find a home for the next five-and-thirty years. In Jersey all his eccentricities had ample food and leisure for development. Life here was even quieter than at Florence. A few friends—the Brownings,

Charles and his wife, and Alfred—visited him from time to time. Now and then, too, he made flying visits to England. But for the most part he lived in a seclusion which tended to exaggerate his peculiarities. He became an ardent Freemason, and was for some time deeply influenced by Henry Melville, a neighbour of his, who claimed to have discovered an ancient and long-forgotten science of astrology in which was to be found the true explanation of Masonic Symbolism. So deeply was Frederick impressed with the importance of this discovery that he travelled to London with his friend in the summer of 1872, and spent several disheartening months in an endeavour to induce the Duke of Leinster, Grand Master of Ireland, to take up Mr. Melville's scheme. It was during this visit that FitzGerald, who died ten years later, leaving a legacy of £1000 to his friend's three daughters, saw him for the last time, and in a letter to Mrs. Kemble he describes Frederick as "quite grand and sincere in this as in all else; with the faith of a gigantic child—pathetic and yet humorous to consort with."

The missionaries returned to Jersey without having extracted any definite answer, and, undeterred by the failure, Frederick (in conjunction with "A Tudor") set about the task of editing a treatise by his friend, in which the discovery was set forth at length.



The book appeared in 1874 under the sounding title of *Veritas*, but it is to be feared that in spite of its title and the mass of complicated maps of the heavens, symbolical pictures, cross references and notes with which the combined industry of editors and author furnished it, it did not make many converts.

But notwithstanding these vagaries Frederick's interests remained extraordinarily varied and his mind extraordinarily active. In Italy he had been a keen student of painting, buying with discretion, and also attaining considerable proficiency in the art himself. His family still possess one excellent example of his work, an Italian landscape painted in half an hour on the back of his plate after breakfast, and the manuscripts of the Jersey period are often covered with spirited pen and pencil sketches, which shew that he had not entirely abandoned his former hobby. But it was to literature and philosophy that his mind was now principally devoted. His own writings shew how closely he had studied the poets of the middle eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and he continued to read voraciously on every kind of subject. In an old note-book, the contents of which obviously cover a very short space of time, I find entries in his handwriting which give some idea of the scope of his occupations. There are scraps of English and Latin verse, several rough drafts of an

Essay on Figurative Language, notes on various books such as Scott's *Napoleon*, *She Stoops to Conquer*, Gray's *Letters*, *Tristram Shandy*, *Æsop*, *Humphrey Clinker*, and the Koran; the beginning of a disquisition on Gothic poetry, with references to Saxo Grammaticus and Blair's *Ossian*, some very technical biological notes on the distribution and variation of species, long lists of rhymes and military terms, an elaborate analysis of the Evidences of Christianity, besides a sketch of the Peninsular War and other fragmentary discussions on such subjects as Greek History, the Origin of the Art of Writing, the Exploits of the Buccaneers, and the Philosophy of Sterne.

Besides this, his great passion for music must not be forgotten. There is a family tradition that in Florence he lived in a vast hall designed by Michael Angelo, surrounded by forty fiddlers. In Jersey his equipage was less ambitious, consisting only of a small organ, on which he used to improvise until he was over eighty years of age. All these diverse interests combined to keep his mind fresh in spite of his isolation. He maintained also a wonderful amount of physical vitality. In 1867 he batted for an hour to his nephew Lionel's bowling, hoping, as he said, to be able to "revive the cricket habit" and, in spite of a good deal of nervous weakness and hypochondria, shewed few signs of old age.

until 1891, when his sight began to fail him. Indeed he retained almost till the end the full use of his powers, his keen appreciation of natural beauty, and his pleasure in the simple things of life—a bottle of good wine, a good story, and the company of a few congenial friends. During all this time, however, he had published nothing. The need for self-expression, of which his restless spirit must have been unceasingly conscious, found satisfaction in an indefatigable output of letters. Chief among these is an almost unbroken series addressed to his friend Mary Brotherton, author of *Respectable Sinners* and other novels and poems, and wife of Augustus Brotherton, an artist, whose acquaintance the poet had made in Italy. These letters give an admirable picture of his state of mind during the latter years. Their tortuous, loosely constructed, but always lucid and emphatic sentences teem with energy—energy of belief, of hope, of criticism, of exhortation and satire, and through all there shines that extraordinary directness and simplicity of mind which so endeared the writer to those who knew him. But it is perhaps in the satirical passages that the reader feels the sense of personal contact most keenly. One seems to hear the old poet rumble and thunder and thump the table, his eye twinkling with a kind of gigantic archness as he rolls out terrific epithets and

grotesque anathemas. No doubt his outlook changed considerably during this long period of seclusion, the effect of which was heightened by the death of his wife in 1884, and the gradual loss of his brothers and most valued friends. With the approach of old age, his beliefs and prejudices began to lose something of their violence. He himself speaks more than once of a definite spiritual transformation which he believed to have taken place within himself. And with this modification of outlook he began to attach less importance to the actual forms of belief. Now that he had become so definitely convinced of the essential spiritual unity of all creation it seemed to matter little in what form that conviction found utterance, and one is not surprised to find his views becoming more apparently orthodox. And this gradual weakening of personal prejudices had another even more important effect, for there seems no doubt that it helped to break up the long silence which had succeeded the publication of *Days and Hours*. With the access of spiritual calm there disappeared that excessive sensibility to criticism and that almost haughty diffidence which had been correlative with the poet's shyness and aversion to ordinary society. He had continued the habit of composition in spite of his shrinking from publicity, and in 1890, after thirty-six years of silence, he

published a long volume of blank verse Idylls called *The Isles of Greece*, which was followed in the next year by another volume of classical stories under the title of *Daphne and other Poems*. Both of these ventures were well received, and, encouraged by their success, he published in 1895, under the title of *Poems of the Day and Year*, a selection from the volumes of 1853 and 1854, to which were added one or two short poems of later date. In February 1898 he died in the London house of his eldest son, Captain Julius Tennyson, whither he had migrated from Jersey in 1896.

The leading characteristics of Frederick Tennyson's life and personality are reflected with extraordinary fidelity in his poems. Their chief faults are an extreme abstraction and an extreme diffuseness. He never seems actually to have written for publication; even his first volume was not published until he was forty-seven years of age, and, had it not been for the encouragement of FitzGerald, the Brownings, and other friends, would probably not have been issued even then. That his mind was capable of clear and concentrated thought is shewn by such poems as the lines to "Beauty" (see p. 6), and Kingsley remarked with truth that even in his most abstract poems he often writes with the neatness of Pope. Unhappily, not having the idea of publication before his

mind, he too often preferred to give free rein to his desire for self-expression and his sensuous delight in words. Having found a subject which suited him, he would play with it as a musician does with a musical theme, now compressing, now expanding it, repeating it with variations, and sometimes (it would appear from his manuscripts) even treating it simultaneously in different metres. It followed that his critical faculty was very little exercised during the process of composition, and when he did make up his mind to publication, his natural indolence supervened, and, aided perhaps by that haughtiness of temper which lay behind his moral humility and personal diffidence, made it impossible for him to put his hand to any work of revision. The effect of this is visible even in the 1854 volume, where, in addition to the great prolixity of many of the pieces, there is at least one instance of stanzas having been left in a poem in which they have absolutely no logical place. And there are besides many instances of grammatical carelessness, and here and there curious errors of metre and rhyme. These weaknesses were much accentuated by the poet's devotion to purely abstract thought and his extraordinary fluency. He was exceedingly fond of an eight-line stanza elaborately rhymed, in which he was apparently able to compose with a

minimum of effort, and the cloudy visions and vague music, amidst which his mind continually moved, took shape in it with an ease which, though sometimes admirable, too often betrayed him into prolixity. None the less the 1854 volume contained much that is of real value. There is in it a kind of ingenuous largeness of vision—something at once grand and childish—and a Handelian roll of melody, animated here and there in such poems as “Ariel,” “To the Cicala,” “The Poet’s Heart,” and the lines on a “Summer Fly,” by an energy of imagination fairy-like in its range and lightness, and needing only a craftsman’s obduracy in compression and exclusion to raise it above criticism.

Unhappily, the years which followed the publication of this volume proved fatal to the poet’s development. In spite of the actuality of such poems as “Harvest Home,” “The Blackbird,” and “The First of March,” the lyrics had suffered not a little from an excessive vagueness. The author seemed to move apart in a dateless land of rocks and roses and vineyards; a land inhabited by timeless beings, kings and warriors and infants, aged men and maidens; a land thrilling with the song of nightingales, rumbling with solemn tempests, shot with shafted sunlight. One longs to lure him down from his

plumed woods, chill mountain-tops and tufted vales. But alas, fate and his own predilection decreed otherwise.

With the removal to Jersey his abstraction became greater than ever. Indeed, he seems practically to have abandoned lyric writing altogether. Occasionally he was moved by some special event, such as the death in 1887 of his sister Emily, once the betrothed of Arthur Hallam (see p. 206). Now and then, too, he amused himself with a sonnet (often founded on a theme which he had already treated in stanza form), and sometimes he indulged his humour in an attempt at satire. His efforts in this latter direction seem, however, to have been intended solely for his own amusement, and though his manuscripts contain many fragments, none seem ever to have been brought to completion. One regrets that this should have been so, for it was in these diversions that the poet came nearest to human life, and many of them display terseness, humour, and a delightful and characteristic energy.

The following lines have an Aristophanic quality which is a pleasant relief from the extreme abstraction of his more serious work :—

I had a vision very late  
After a dinner of white-bait ;  
Methought I saw the Himalaya



Peak on Peak to heaven aspire  
 Higher still and ever higher.  
 But when my sight grew somewhat clearer  
 And the Himalayas nearer,  
 They changed to dunghills, only think  
 What magic in a fortieth wink !  
 Alas to dunghills ! What a change  
 From that stupendous snowy range !  
 To dunghills, dirty slope on slope  
 Of dunghills, and a cock atop  
 Of each one, with disdainful crow  
 Dumfounding the cock below.  
 The first with awful Majesty  
 Pealing his early Kickerykee  
 Silenced the second, who was heard  
 Cock-a-doodling down the third.  
 Between the first heap and the last  
 Continuous chanticleering passed  
 And the lowest was the loudest  
 And the last little cock the proudest.  
 Each one like a human swell  
 Had his little tale to tell  
 Of how he had a grain or two  
 More than his neighbour. . . .

Excellent, too, in a more serious vein are  
 these lines on a " Cathedral Close " from a long  
 unfinished satire :—

These are they fix'd men of vows  
 Call'd from fair Cathedral close,  
 Where is the slumberous changeless realm  
 Of Quiet, set with oak and elm,  
 Whence loving eyes from ancient nook  
 On their beloved mother look—  
 Great Mother, on whose life they feed,  
 Stone Mother, serving with a creed  
 Their broken hearts and utmost need—

She 'tis who to her children dear  
Pouring their miseries in her ear,  
Oft and oft for fish hath thrown  
A serpent, and for bread a stone.  
The lights, the tumult, and the dust  
Half craze these quiet men and just  
With goodly bodies well to do,  
And souls as square as two and two—  
They raise their voices like a chant—  
“ Goodness what is it that they want ?  
What is it we are call'd to do ?  
We thought that we were just and true,  
Our principles begetting facts,  
Faith set to life and words to acts—  
Daily three times the carols chimed,  
The organ roll'd, the voices hymn'd,  
The echoes waving down the aisles,  
The honour'd vast, and wondrous piles  
Column, and arch, and lovely screen  
With blazing oriels caught between  
Shedding fair colours on the green,  
The hushed solemnity, the life  
Of duty far from worldly strife,  
The music of the Holy Word  
Daily, almost hourly heard—  
The words go up, the songs ascend,  
World without end, world without end,  
All things orderly and sweet  
From heaven-rapt soul to carven seat,  
From blessed song, and chanted prayer  
To marble cherub's back-blown hair.  
Is it not god-like thus to climb  
On Art wings almost out of Time ?  
And thro' the sensuous frame control  
The inner life and lead the soul ?  
Breathe o'er old forms immortal youth  
And make all beauty nurse of Truth ? ”  
O carven towers, O saintly piles,

Sweet bells, sweet organ, holy aisles,  
O winged monsters, daily grinning  
From gurgoyles at our daily sinning.  
O weeping Saints, in tears because  
Daily we hear and break the laws.  
Staid, antique cups and chandeliers,  
Dim shrines of martyrs, and of seers,  
Fair statues, pictures of renown,  
Dalmatic, surplice, alb, and gown.  
Elysian tranquillities  
Of ancient mansions, turf, and trees,  
Still gardens kiss'd by many a wave  
Of harmonies that flood the nave  
At morn and evensong, and praise  
Of tender voices all our days,  
Farewell ! if all this show of zeal  
Were love-born—all that seemeth, real,  
I must say farewell ! and cui bono ?  
To Cantuar, or to Pio Nono !

The following lines from the same poem amusingly suggest a type made familiar by mid-Victorian caricaturists, while containing a charge which still provokes the wrath of the social reformer :—

With monstrous little in my head  
But in my hand a purse instead,  
And underneath my little feet  
Many an acre, many a street,  
Dirt and trees, and stocks and stones,  
Were all that I could call my own  
Except the lisp, and drawl, and those  
Enormous whiskers, and the nose.  
In short respectable as pig  
Who though he may not drive a gig  
Eats, drinks, sleeps, dies—does all he can  
To seem, and is, a Gentleman.

And for a last quotation we may take a long passage directed against the poet's favourite enemy, the Church hypocrite :—

Their salvation is to seek  
 A dark damp cavern once a week  
 To which they walk, they ride, they run, they  
 Roll, and shake the earth on Sunday—  
 For what but this do they to win  
 Salvation, who persist in sin,  
 Who feign an aspect of contrition,  
 Mumble, and mump, and change position  
 Till habit, thick with years of dirt,  
 Clings to them like a Nessus-shirt.  
 But what a falling-off art thou,  
 O Monday, with the blacken'd brow.  
 "Lord give to us our daily bread,"  
 To his best hat the baker said,  
 And leaves on Monday at the gate  
 Chaff, and alum, and short weight.  
 "Forgive our debts as we forgive,"  
 And if the widow cannot give  
 Her infants food, or clothes, or pay  
 Her rent, you take her bed away.  
 "Into temptation lead us not,"  
 On Sunday, saith the evening sot  
 Of Saturday, who went forth with will  
 To meet, or make the social ill.  
 My Lord is in his scarlet seat,  
 His air, his get-up, is complete.  
 "Love thy neighbours," saith the lord,  
 "Kill not, steal not," saith the Word,  
 And yet on Monday morning he  
 Beggars his security  
 And flies his country, leaving one  
 Who loved him well, dismay'd, undone.  
 "Do to others," murmurs he,  
 "As thou wouldst they should do to thee."

Thrice his bills have been renew'd,  
Jew'd himself, his wife he jew'd,  
And stole her diamonds at last  
And had a necklace made of paste,  
And, tho' the jeweller who made it  
Thrice sent his bill, he has not paid it.

These, however, were evidently mere recreations from what he considered the more serious work of his later life. Unfortunately, these serious works, the long idyllic poems contained in the volumes of 1890 and 1891, can hardly be considered anything but a mistake. The freedom from restraint which the narrative form allowed him gave fatal scope to the poet's fluency and disregard of the canons of construction. He very soon acquired a facility in blank verse as remarkable as that which practice had given him in the lyric form, and, without the necessary limitations which the more exacting measures imposed on him, his pen ran to the most ungovernable lengths. The *Isles of Greece* contained many notable passages, some of a strange idyllic beauty steeped in the richness and splendour of the Mediterranean islands, the magic of which drew him so powerfully; some of a fine eloquence; some fired with a deep and genuine feeling. But the whole is unfortunately diffuse and monotonous to a degree that is likely to obscure its intervals of inspiration. The *Daphne* volume has

even greater defects. Here the oases of beauty are less frequent, and there are long tracts of Swedenborgian philosophy, for the introduction of which the poet seems to have used the classical stories as a rather perfunctory excuse.

On the whole it must be confessed that these two volumes, upon which their author must, for all his fluency, have expended considerable time and thought, are unsuccessful, and one cannot but regret that they should have tempted him away from the perfection of his very real, but never adequately developed, lyrical faculty. As it is one has to admit that even the comparatively small body of lyrical poetry which he left behind him shews grave shortcomings. But it shews also unusual merits, and it has been my object in making this selection to shew these merits as clearly as possible. The selector's task is always a difficult one, but in the present case it is rendered doubly difficult by the fact that the imperfection of the poet's work shews itself not only in occasional weak poems, but in the weak and diffuse stanzas which mar many even of the best. This characteristic has induced me to take a course which I am conscious may expose me to unfavourable criticism, for I have ventured in many instances to cut out redundancies even in works already published—and (I must con-

fess it) even in one poem that has found a sanctuary in Palgrave's *Golden Treasury*. I have thought myself justified in doing this by the haphazard manner in which, as I have shewn, Frederick Tennyson allowed his work to come to publication. I feel that if he himself were confronted with the task of finally revising his work for presentation to a critical public, and if he took the task as seriously as does his editor, he would be compelled to the same course. But whatever may be thought of the method employed, it will, I think, be admitted that the revision has produced a genuinely interesting body of work, which will prove well worthy of preservation. It is in this belief that the guilty editor offers the volume with all humility to the public.

A word should be said as to the origin of the poems included in the selection. The majority of them appeared in the 1854 and 1895 volumes, while some have been taken from the privately printed collection of 1853, and some from manuscripts which have not before been printed. If exception should be taken to the very liberal use of capital letters and dashes throughout the volume, it may be said in defence that those which remain are a mere remnant of those which were there before. The use of these symbols evidently had a special meaning in the poet's mind,

and I have not liked entirely to abolish them.

Finally, I must express my gratitude to Mrs. Julius Tennyson for her kindness in putting manuscripts at my disposal and permitting me to make use of published poems which are still copyright, and to Lord Tennyson and Mr. Walter C. A. Ker (who was responsible for the 1895 selection) for much assistance of various kinds. I am especially indebted to Mr. Ker for his kindness in revising the proofs of this Introduction and making many valuable suggestions.

C. T.



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## NOTE

The following poems in this volume are taken from the privately printed volume of 1853 and have not previously been published :—

A Heliograph (p. 1); Beauty (p. 6); An April Shower (p. 9); Genius (p. 14); Laughter (p. 24); Sunset (p. 37); Ten Years Ago (p. 43); Midsummer Eve (p. 45); Lament of the Wood-Nymphs (p. 48); Winds of Spring (p. 56); Love and War (p. 58); Morning and Music (p. 60); Twenty-First of September (p. 80); Day and Night (p. 90); The Churchyard (p. 101); The Birthday of Love (p. 104); The Blind Man (p. 110); Midsummer (p. 116); Time and the Hour (p. 118); To Phantasy (p. 120); Summer and Winter (p. 124); From "Songs of an Old Man" (p. 152); The Last Day of Summer (p. 160); Moonlight (p. 165); From "The Forest" (3) Night (p. 200); From "The Poet" (1) A Prayer (p. 202).

The following are taken from manuscripts and are also published for the first time :—

Peaceful Rest (p. 87); Solitude (p. 136); River of Life (p. 158); A Prophecy (p. 168); The Sea (p. 175); Coming Tempest (p. 192); From "The City" (p. 194); To the Poet's Mother (p. 208); Old Age (p. 209); To Death (p. 210); Hope (p. 211). This was published in an extended form in *Days and Hours*; In Old Age (p. 214).

The lines on the death of the poet's sister Emily (p. 206) were first published in Chapter III. of *Tennyson and His Friends* (Macmillan & Co., 1911).

Where poems have appeared in both the 1854 and 1895 volumes, and the text in each differs, I have in some cases preferred the earlier form.

## A HELIOGRAPH

No earthly touch of mortal Art  
Hath shaped this magic counterpart,  
That lovely aspect, soft and bright,  
Was drawn with pencils of the light.

One moment—and the hand divine  
Had wrought thine image perfect-fine,  
The Shaper of the substance, He  
Could trace the shadow, only He.

Though I was young when thou wert old,  
Young is the face that I behold,  
And now my days outnumber thine  
When lengthen'd to their last decline.

Thy truth with the same truth is given—  
Clearly, as tho' the arch of Heaven  
Were shadow'd in a waveless sea,  
Thy faith, thy love, thy life I see.

Mother, it is thyself, the same ;  
Should Death, who took thee, take our name,  
Whoever looks on this may see  
All thou hast been, all they should be.

If in those eyes some clouds o'ertake  
The laughing lights that from them break,  
Thro' them more clearly didst thou see  
The true shape of humanity.

If round that mouth, whose peaceful gate  
Was ne'er unclosed to scorn or hate,  
Earth's ills have tortured to the earth  
The Heavenward-winged curves of mirth,

More mercifully from it came  
The low sweet voice that could not blame,  
The tearful smile that most endears  
More tenderly dried up our tears.

Ev'n as I gaze, mine ear down-dips  
To catch the breathing of those lips,  
Where the last blessed words, that fell  
In blessing from them, seem to dwell.

My days roll back, I dream no more,  
Thy very self I stand before,  
And thou art showing me again  
How women serve to make us men.

I hear thee say—"When it shall be  
That years have sunder'd thee and me,  
And care and space shall hold apart  
Hand from hand, and heart from heart ;

“Oft as thou seest the moon-lit night  
Like blessed memories, calm and bright,  
Oh! know, I send o'er Land and Sea  
On its hush'd wheels a love to thee.”

The lamp wanes dim, and dimmer now,  
I feel thy lips upon my brow,  
And now I sleep, and dream—of things  
Ah! not like my rememberings!

Thou mayst be Queen of some soft star  
Far off, immeasurably far,  
And strong in godlike thoughts and deeds,  
And mindless of thy mortal weeds;

Thou mayst be close beside me here;  
But could I bid Thyself appear,  
And live—I should be half afraid  
To choose between thee and thy shade.

How oft the Flatterer's art hath drest  
Weak Vanity in Falsehood's vest;  
Here in this sun-drawn image see  
The very Self of Charity!

## ZEPHYRUS

THREE hours were wanting to the noon of day,  
When long-hair'd Zephyrus flying from the  
sun  
O'er the green, wooded uplands wing'd his  
way,  
And left the plains where freshness there  
was none ;  
Amid the western clouds and shadows gray  
He thought to slumber till the day was  
done,  
And up he clomb into a realm of wonder,  
With towers, and domes, and pyramids of  
thunder.

The wild birds mourn'd for him, the wild  
flowers sent  
Their sweets to call him back, they fain  
would keep ;  
The trembling leaves sigh'd farewell as he  
went,  
The thunders spread their banners o'er his  
sleep ;



Silence stood sentinel before his tent,  
And hush'd the earth, and breathed upon  
the deep ;  
On a gold cloud his curly head he laid,  
And dream'd of virgin buds and morning  
shade.

Three hours were sped since noon—when  
Zephyrus, free  
Of slumber, leapt up and began to sing,  
And ran, and dipt his foot into the sea,  
And then an arm, and then a shining wing,  
And moved upon the waters gloriously ;  
The waters at the touch of their own king  
Quiver'd unto their springs with joyful  
fear,  
And made low answers silver-sweet to hear.

The glassy ripples first began to throng  
Each to the smooth shore like an eager  
hound ;  
Then a faint murmur like a whisper'd song  
Crept o'er the tawny sands ; and then a  
sound  
Of a far tumult waxing near and strong ;  
And then the flash, and thundering rebound  
Of powers cast back in conflict, and the  
moan  
Of the long, banded waters overthrown !

## BEAUTY

LIKE as the subtle Air that feeds the frame  
Enters unfelt, and flows around unseen,  
The magic of thy Beauty overcame,  
And turn'd my heart from all that it had  
been.

And as the sweet Air, when denied, is Death,  
I felt, belovéd, when thou wert not by,  
How this poor life flow'd only from thy  
breath,  
Follow'd thy steps, and danced within thine  
eye.

Like as sweet Voices linger in the ear  
And Music, that we heard not while 'twas  
playing,  
Comes back unbid for many a day and  
year,  
And haunts the heart, like Spirits earthward  
straying,

When first I saw thee in thine own abode,  
I saw that beauty without fear or pain,  
But now it rules my nature like a God,  
And in my vision rises up again.

And yet, beloved, 'tis no longer thou,  
But something rare which Fancy in the brain  
Begets on Memory ; could I see thee now,  
Thy beauty by its shadow would be slain.

If I should never more behold thy face,  
Alas ! if thou wert dead and lowly laid,  
That Shadow would rule o'er me in thy  
place,  
Methinks I still should love that lovely  
Shade.

Oh ! let me linger near thee, hear thy voice,  
That if we meet not through Eternity,  
My wandering, widow'd spirit may rejoice  
In everlasting echoes drawn from thee.

Oh ! let me look into thy deep blue eyes,  
That if we part for ever, if we part,  
My soul may live upon felicities  
For ever, shadows of the joy thou art.

The blind sun-haunted eye what art can heal ?  
Or rob sweet vases of their odorous breath ?  
So from my heart no tyranny shall steal  
The treasure of thy beauty—no, not Death !

But in that World where happy Souls are free,  
With wings that tire not, pure of earthly  
Ill,  
A simple thought shall bear me unto thee,  
Nor Space, nor Time shall part us—if I  
Will !

## AN APRIL SHOWER

ON a cool sward that leans towards the seas  
I stood, the morning sunbeams on me  
playing,  
And saw a rainbow arch the deep, inlaying  
The fresh, green flood with soft emblazon-  
ries,  
And with its fairy tissue trembling o'er  
The woods, and slopes, and cities on the  
shore.

That pictured shower across the waters sail'd  
Stately, and slow; and by the breezes  
fann'd  
Nearer, and nearer floated to the land,  
And in its tears the purple islands veil'd,  
And touch'd the Fisher's sail, and sea-bird's  
breast  
With crimson fire, and green, and amethyst.

And as I look'd young Venus seem'd to rise  
Amid the rose, and gold—and, round her  
throwing  
A royal mantle with those colours glowing  
Which she had stolen from the vernal skies,

Held towards the shore, and laugh'd with  
childish glee  
To see her beauty imaged in the sea.

Onward she came—her peerless foot impress'd  
Upon the smooth-ribb'd pearl ; then breath  
of balm

Began to stir the air, and waters calm,  
Whose harp-toned rippings silverly caress'd  
Her curl'd shell fleckt with bubbles of sea-  
dew—

Fair birds with gleamy wings before her  
flew.

Above her curved the arch of sevenfold light,  
Around her prow the rosy Sea-nymphs  
hung,

A winsome melody she softly sung,—  
The lazy world grew wakeful at the sight,  
And blue-eyed April took her by the hand,  
As she stopt down upon the dewy sand.

## THE SKYLARK

How the blithe Lark runs up the golden stair  
That leans thro' cloudy gates from heaven  
to earth,  
And all alone in the empyreal air  
Fills it with jubilant sweet songs of mirth ;  
How far he seems, how far  
With the light upon his wings,  
Is it a bird, or star  
That shines, and sings ?

What matter if the days be dark and frore,  
That sunbeam tells of other days to be,  
And singing in the light that floods him  
o'er  
In joy he overtakes Futurity ;  
Under cloud-arches vast  
He peeps, and sees behind  
Great Summer coming fast  
Adown the wind !

And now he dives into a rainbow's rivers,  
In streams of gold and purple he is  
drown'd,  
Shrilly the arrows of his song he shivers,  
As tho' the stormy drops were turn'd to  
sound ;  
And now he issues thro',  
He scales a cloudy tower,  
Faintly, like falling dew,  
His fast notes shower.

Let every wind be hush'd, that I may hear  
The wondrous things he tells the World  
below,  
Things that we dream of he is watching  
near,  
Hopes, that we never dream'd, he would  
bestow,  
Alas ! the storm hath roll'd  
Back the gold gates again,  
Or surely he had told  
All Heaven to men !

So the victorious Poet sings alone,  
And fills with light his solitary home,  
And thro' that glory sees new worlds fore-  
shown,  
And hears high songs, and triumphs yet to  
come ;



He waves the air of Time  
With thrills of golden chords,  
And makes the world to climb  
On linked words.

What if his hair be gray, his eyes be dim,  
If wealth forsake him, and if friends be cold,  
Wonder unbars her thousand gates to him,  
Truth never fails, nor Beauty waxeth old ;  
More than he tells his eyes  
Behold, his spirit hears,  
Of grief, and joy, and sighs  
'Twixt joy and tears.

Blest is the man who with the sound of song  
Can charm away the heartache, and forget  
The frost of Penury, and the stings of  
Wrong,  
And drown the fatal whisper of Regret ;  
Darker are the abodes  
Of Kings, though his be poor,  
While Fancies, like the Gods,  
Pass through his door.

Singing thou scalest Heaven upon thy wings,  
Thou liftest a glad heart into the skies ;  
He maketh his own sunrise, while he sings,  
And turns the dusty earth to Paradise ;  
I see thee sail along  
Far up the sunny streams ;  
Unseen, I hear his song,  
I see his dreams.

## GENIUS

THINE is a heart that loves to laugh and sing  
From Morningtide until the Vesper chime,  
And pleasant as a stripling's in the spring  
To thee is the dread face of arméd Time;  
And as a man that runs before a King  
Smoothing the way for his white horses  
proud,  
"Behold the heart shall vanquish every-  
thing"  
As with a trumpet thou proclaim'st aloud!

To thee the cares and sorrows of our years  
Are but the shadows that bring out the  
light;  
Thy griefs, thy truthful sighs, thy tender  
tears,  
Make thy mirth blossom, and thy hopes  
more bright;  
Fortune with her dark brows, and lips of  
guile,  
Is to be won, as shrewish beauties are;  
Honour, a sweet companion, who will smile  
Sooner on dance and song than deeds of  
War.

The others do but sneer when they behold  
The red-robed revel pass before the gate,  
And turn from Love with eyes askance and  
cold,  
And in his dimples see the snares of Fate ;  
The trumpet sounds—they must to battle  
ride—  
They choose them linkéd mail against all  
harms,  
They yoke unto their chariots Power and  
Pride ;  
The war is to be won by weight of arms.

But thou the hill of Life shalt swiftly scale  
By dove-wing'd hopes beyond the eagles  
borne,  
While the faint wheels of laden chariots fail  
Dragg'd earthward by the weight of cares  
forlorn ;  
They shall not mount with all their page-  
antry ;  
They are the Wise—Giants both tall and  
strong ;  
Thou with flown hair, and pluméd heels  
shalt fly,—  
Thou art a boy—with nothing but a song !

## THE GLORY OF NATURE

If only once the chariot of the morn  
Had scatter'd from its wheels the twilight  
dun,  
But once the unimaginable sun  
Flash'd godlike thro' perennial clouds for-  
lorn,  
And shown us Beauty for a moment born ;

If only once blind eyes had seen the Spring,  
Waking amid the triumphs of midnoon ;  
But once had seen the lovely summer boon  
Pass by in state like a full-robed King,  
What time the enamour'd woodlands laugh  
and sing ;

If only once deaf ears had heard the joy  
Of the wild birds, or morning breezes  
blowing,  
Or silver fountains from their caverns  
flowing,  
Or the deep-voiced rivers rolling by,  
Then night eternal fallen from the sky ;

If only once weird Time had rent asunder  
 The curtain of the clouds, and shown us  
     night  
 Climbing into the awful Infinite  
 Those stairs whose steps are worlds, above  
     and under,  
 Glory on glory, wonder upon wonder !

The Lightnings lit the Earthquake on his way :  
 The sovran Thunder spoken to the World ;  
 The realm-wide banners of the wind un-  
     furl'd ;  
 Earth-prison'd fires broke loose into the  
     day ;  
 Or the great seas awoke—then slept for aye !

Ah ! sure the heart of Man, too strongly tried  
 By Godlike Presences so vast and fair,  
 Withering with dread, or sick with love's  
     despair  
 Had wept for ever, and to Heaven cried,  
 Or struck with lightnings of delight had  
     died !

But He, though heir of Immortality,  
 With mortal dust too feeble for the sight,  
 Draws through a veil God's overwhelming  
     light.  
 Use arms the Soul—anon there moveth by  
 A more majestic Angel—and we die !

## THE POET'S HEART

WHEN the Poet's heart is dead,  
That with fragrance, light, and sound  
Like a summer day was fed,  
Where, oh ! where shall it be found,  
In sea, or air, or underground ?

It shall be a sunny place,  
An urn of odours, a still well,  
Upon whose undisturbed face  
The lights of Heaven shall love to dwell,  
And its far depths make visible.

It shall be a crimson flower  
That in Fairyland hath thriven ;  
For dew a gentle Sprite shall pour  
Tears of Angels down from Heaven,  
And hush the winds at morn and even.

It shall be on some fair morn  
A swift and many-voiced wind,  
Singing down the skies of June,  
And with its breath and gladsome tune  
Send joy into the heart and mind.

It shall be a fountain springing  
Far up into the happy light,  
With a silver carol ringing,  
With a magic motion flinging  
Its jocund waters, starry-bright.

It shall be a tiny thing  
Whose breath is in it for a day,  
To fold at Eve its weary wing,  
And at the dewfall die away  
On some pure air, or golden ray,

Falling in a violet-bloom,  
Tomb'd in a sphere of pearly rain,  
Its blissful ghost a wild perfume  
To come forth with the Morn again,  
And wander through an infant's brain ;

And the pictures it should set  
In that temple of Delight  
Would make the tearless cherub fret  
With its first longing for a sight  
Of things beyond the Day and Night.

But one moment of its span  
Should thicker grow with blissful things  
Than any days of mortal Man,  
Or his years of Sorrow can,  
Though beggars should be crowned kings.

It shall be a chord divine  
By Mercy out of Heaven hung forth,  
Along whose trembling, airy line  
A dying Saint shall hear on earth  
Triumphant songs, and harped mirth !

It shall be a wave forlorn  
That o'er the vast and fearful sea  
In troubled pride and beauty borne  
From winged storms shall vainly flee,  
And seek for rest where none shall be.

It shall be a mountain Tree,  
Thro' whose great arms the winds shall blow  
Louder than the roaring sea,  
And toss its plumed head to and fro—  
But a thousand flowers shall live below.

It shall be a kingly Star  
That o'er a thousand Suns shall burn,  
Where the high Sabaoth are,  
And round its glory flung afar  
A mighty host shall swiftly turn.

All things of beauty it shall be—  
All things of power—of joy—of fear—  
But out of bliss and agony  
It shall come forth more pure and free,  
And sing a song more sweet to hear.



For methinks, when it hath pass'd  
Through wondrous Nature's world-wide  
reign,  
Perchance it may come home at last,  
And the old Earth may hear again  
Its lofty voice of Joy and Pain.

## A BIRD OF MORNING

ERE yet the lamp of Day  
Flamed in the East, my lattice I unbarr'd,  
And saw the purple zenith still bestarr'd,  
The earth asleep ; rare odours wing'd their  
way  
From the dew-laden blossoms of the may,  
And flowers that lay in dream along the  
sloping sward.

I heard the rivulets chime ;  
In deepest darkness were the forests drown'd ;  
Not yet the everlasting peaks were crown'd  
With the first fires—against the orient  
clime  
The mountains huge stood like the walls of  
Time,  
That 'twixt the doleful World and happy  
Islands frown'd.

Just then, 'tween Day and Night,  
I heard a wild bird singing in the dawn ;  
Far over hill, and stream, and wood, and  
lawn

That solitary magic took its flight,  
That holy, tender utterance of delight,  
By loving echoes deep into the forests  
drawn.

“Ye mourners, wake, and hark !”

I cried—“’tis Love a-pleading for the  
Earth—

To-day a Conqueror shall have his birth ;  
Ye melancholy dreamers, rise, and mark,  
The ancient things are ceasing with the  
dark,

And Death on cloudy wings is gone for  
ever forth !”

Around, above, below,

Was nought but me, and that enchantment  
strong—

But lo ! a God, a God is borne along !

And golden smoke, and fiery rivers flow

Down on the earth—great winds begin to  
blow,

A God hath storm’d the World to listen to  
that song.

## LAUGHTER

THE pluméd Pallas lays her armour by ;  
Long-hair'd Apollo leans upon his lyre ;  
The blest Pierides forget to quire ;  
And Hera's self is sick of majesty ;  
Hebe neglects to fill her cup of gold ;  
Dian unquivers her ; the hand that grasps  
The unrelenting thunderbolt unclasps  
Obliviously, and drops its lightnings cold.

The golden star of Eve in Venus' breast  
Gleams, as in water, on the helm of Mars ;  
While he, unmindful of his ancient wars,  
Dreams on her lap in a half-waking rest ;  
The very Eagle droops his drowsy eyes :  
Ah ! who may venture, if the Immortals fail,  
Sweet-sounding song, or many-pictured tale,  
Beneath the dome of the empyreal skies ?

'Tis weary Eve—and down the long, long  
halls  
The level Sun streams thro' the Olympian  
doors,  
And rolls in silence o'er the jasper floors  
Scatter'd with fallen cups and coronals ;

'Tis weary Eve—what fires their languid  
sight?

Whose voice is this ringing so loud and  
clear,

That fills with joyful echoes all the sphere,  
And rouses slumbering hearts with strange  
delight?

“Mortal I am, and I am hither sped  
By mortal men—for two long, weary hours,  
All sounds in Heaven have ceased, Im-  
mortal Powers,  
And men are fearful that the Gods are  
dead!  
Tho' Sorrow driven from Heaven with  
us abides,  
There are good things ye dream not of  
on earth;  
If some shed tears, why others weep for  
mirth,  
Some press their hearts, but others hold  
their sides!

“The charming nightingale sings o'er and  
o'er  
The selfsame song—the murmur of the  
bee  
Changes not in its sorrow, or its glee,  
Owls hoot, and eagles scream, and lions  
roar;

The Muses strike their blessed harps,  
 and lull  
 Your ears with harmony—but Man is free  
 Beneath the load of his humanity  
 To laugh, ye Gods, when Heaven and  
 Earth are dull !

“Great Gods, if ye made visible your state  
 Daily, or hurl'd your lightnings from the  
 sky,  
 Familiar with celestial Majesty  
 Man would not heed that ye are strong  
 and great ;  
 Yet sometimes the imperial Thunder rolls  
 Lest Man should drowse. Perfection that  
 would know  
 Its own pre-eminence, must bend below  
 And feel the contact of imperfect souls.

“Earth-born I am, although I venture here ;  
 Ye cannot always wise, or perfect be ;  
 Bear for a while with my mortality,  
 And it will leave ye gladder than ye were :  
 My name is Laughter. Let me be  
 forgiven—  
 By mirthful Poets I am hither sent  
 To tell ye tales, and make ye merriment ;  
 And I will drive dull Silence out of  
 Heaven !”

## THE SOLDIER

THE morn is bright,—the clouds ride swift  
and high,  
The wild breeze curls the woods, the wild  
birds sing  
In answer to a lark that floods the sky  
With fiery notes that make the sunlight  
ring ;  
The world is full of life and power,  
Each moment sweeter than the last,  
Swift youth flies onward to the unborn hour,  
And age unto the Past.

A time-worn chieftain in his garden sate,  
And saw a great host arm'd for battle go,  
With banners and with plumes before  
his gate,  
He heard the music, like a tempest, blow ;  
He saw the banners float and swell,  
The iron lightnings swift and dread,  
And his old eyes grew glad and terrible,  
And sparkled in his head.

Oh! who can think on darkness and on  
 Death,  
 The silence, and the coldness of the grave,  
 The nameless anguish of life's ebbing  
 breath,  
 When the loud trumpet flattereth the  
 brave?  
 While Faith is strong, and Fancy young,  
 And Glory lifts the heart like wine,  
 O God, the knell of nations may be rung  
 In notes that are divine!

And one, his tall helm flashing like a star,  
 With crimson mantle waving o'er his steel,  
 Descended swift, and with a voice of war  
 Trod down the roses 'neath his armed heel;  
 And pointing with his mailed hand  
 To that proud Chivalry and bold,  
 He cried, "Wilt thou too linger in the land,  
 Who wert our Chief of old?"

The trumpet blew again—but his great voice  
 Took up the sound, and he arose in haste,  
 "I come," he cried, "I make the better  
 choice,  
 To do, or die—but not to be surpast;  
 Shall younger men go by, and say,  
 'He was a man, his deeds are done?'  
 I come—my fame that was the rising day,  
 Shall be the setting sun!



“Bring me mine ancient arms, my father’s  
sword,  
My steed—he snuffs the tumult from afar,  
And beats with angry hoof, for he hath  
heard  
The trumpet sound, and seen the cloud  
of war ;  
Farewell, my home, and farewell thou,  
Dearest, save Honour ; I will earn  
Yet one more laurel for this bruised brow  
While yet my pulses burn !

“Ply thou thy distaff, gentle-hearted wife,  
Teach truth, and mercy, sing beneath the  
vine ;  
The dust of battle is my breath of life,  
Oblivion sweeter than to live and pine ;  
To drink in haste the cup of fears,  
To feel, to-day we win or die ;  
To ride away with music in mine ears,  
And back with Victory !

“Can hearts be still, that ever have been stirr’d  
By deeds of Glory—can the arm repose  
Within the breast, that once hath flash’d  
the sword,  
The eye grow blind that lighten’d on our  
foes ?

What music is so sweet to hear  
 As region shouts when Cities craze,  
 And thro' the storméd gates pale Kings  
 appear  
 In sorrow and amaze?"

Again the trumpet sounded, and he rose  
 Strong as in youth, and from his eye there  
 went  
 Arrows of fire, that would confound his  
 foes,  
 And made his lordly head magnificent!  
 But ere he pass'd the porch, a hand  
 Upon his own, like Pity, laid,  
 Into its scabbard press'd the half-drawn  
 brand,  
 A voice, like music, said :

"Oh! fly not thus — remember all thy  
 days  
 By thine own hearth, beneath that ancient  
 tree,  
 Thy children, and their mirth, and loving  
 ways,  
 Forget not all thy vows, forget not me!  
 Oh! I will sing thee other songs  
 Shall stir thee like the morning air,  
 Sweeter than all the voices wrung from  
 wrongs,  
 Pæans, and shouts of war!"

Again the dreadful trumpet rang forlorn,  
Again she sang, "I saw a sight sublime,  
The World's new Conqueror pass the gates  
of Morn,  
And to the crazy battlements of Time  
He led bright hosts of his compeers  
Matchless in beauty, great in limb,  
Strong Spirits of indomitable Years,  
With faces turn'd on Him !

"And with a shout that clave the clouds  
asunder,  
And round the illumined, vast horizon ran  
In endless echoes of melodious thunder,  
Down to the World their godlike march  
began ;  
The armies of the days of old  
Smit thro' with splendours of that sight  
Back on each hand in stormy ruin roll'd,  
And perish'd in the light !

"And One, from whose great presence glory  
came  
As from a sunrise, in a still small voice,  
That made the ether flutter like a flame,  
Utter'd sweet words that made the earth  
rejoice !  
All the World broke forth in songs ;  
'God, our God is come again,  
Build up the fallen cities, heal the wrongs,  
For He shall dwell with men !'"

Once more that note, like evil Angel's, shrill ;  
 He frown'd, and moved disdainful, but she  
 held

Unto his mantle, and his iron will  
 Bent to her breath, although his pride  
 rebell'd :

“ And canst thou arm the bloody hand  
 Against the Stranger, and not fear  
 The woes thou wreakest on another's land  
 May recompense thee here ?

“ Whate'er the fever of thy heart may be,  
 One hope burns deeper than thy thirst of  
 fame,  
 The hope, that sometime, sometime thou  
 shalt see  
 Thy roof-tree o'er thee, and thy hearth the  
 same ;  
 Sometime thou shalt see me, hear me,  
 As in the tender ancient days,  
 Chanting old ditties with my children near  
 me,  
 And teaching them thy praise.”

Far off the war-note died upon the breeze,  
 Like Sorrow drowning in the waves of  
 Time,  
 The leaves, like friendly tongues, discoursed  
 of peace,  
 He heard a blackbird pipe, a rivulet chime ;

As music over madness streams,  
Those sweet notes melted him to sighs,  
Awoke his heart from its tumultuous dreams,  
And clouded o'er his eyes.

But where was he, the pluméd tempter, fled?  
Far down the vale they saw his morion  
    dance  
Above the dust that curl'd around his head,  
And caught the last proud glitter of his  
    lance ;  
And when the blackbird ceased his singing,  
And the wind blew freshly by,  
They heard his hoofs amid the mountains  
    ringing,  
They heard his battle-cry.

A blue-eye'd daughtèr led him to his seat  
Beneath the garden trees, laid by his sword,  
Unclasp'd his glittering helm, and at his  
    feet  
Lay—as he murmur'd fondly, not unheard,  
While his little ones embraced  
His neck, and clomb about his knees,  
“Forgive me, God, if I forgot the Past,  
And teach my spirit Peace !”

## FLIGHT OF THE SWALLOW

THE golden-throated merle, and mellow  
thrush

Chant to us yet—the woodlark will not fly  
His ancient sylvan solitude, or hush  
His dewy pipings for a softer sky ;  
But the swallow flies away,  
I would that I were he,  
He follows the flown May  
Across the sea.

The swallow hath a fickle heart at best,  
He bears off the sweet days he brought us  
o'er,  
And sounds retreat like an ungrateful guest  
That shuns the flatter'd host he sued before ;  
Should kind Mirth be forgot  
When his dark locks are gray,  
And Love remember'd not ?  
Ah ! stay, ah ! stay !

FLIGHT OF THE SWALLOW 35

Know ye of Gladness, that with jocund hearts  
Can cast away old loves for love of new ?  
O friends, the music of a thousand arts  
Charms not so sweetly as a voice that's  
true :

I sang ye songs of sorrow,  
I sang ye songs of glee,  
I cried, await to-morrow,  
Ye heard not me !

Know ye of Sorrow ? can ye understand  
Mortality, that hung unto the robe  
Of Summer, as she flies from land to land,  
Follows swift Youth around the rolling  
globe ?

Joy's winged heart is light,  
But blind are his bright eyes,  
Grief seeth in the night  
Of tears and sighs.

The feathers of Time's wings, ere yet they fall,  
Ye pluck, and from his plumes ye trim  
your own ;

Ye answer to the South wind's silver call,  
Ah ! whither wend ye, leaving me undone ?  
Ah ! stay, dear friends, ah ! stay,  
And leave me not forsaken,  
Care takes not the same way  
That ye have taken.

36 FLIGHT OF THE SWALLOW

In our lorn woods the morn and evensong  
Will fail, and things of sunshine cease to  
be ;  
Lo ! shrilling Winter leadeth Death along,  
I see the tyrant shake his lance at me !  
Delight hath fled the earth,  
The evil days are come ;  
So I will light my hearth,  
And sing at home.

Ye seek the blue isles, and the happy hills,  
Ye rush into the heart of summer skies,  
Ye leave behind ye unremember'd ills,  
Ye fly like happy souls to Paradise !  
Oh ! could ye, blissful things,  
On my dark, utter day,  
Lend me those selfsame wings,  
To flee away !



## SUNSET

HARK ! on the topmost step of yon great stair  
That broadens earthward from the cloudy  
towers  
A Seraph stands, and on the burning air  
Sends his clear voice—he sings of bridal  
flowers,  
And bridal gems that they are scattering  
there ;  
“ Come hither, come ; in these enchanted  
hours  
In sight of God Love shall be wed to Joy,  
And Beauty unto Immortality ! ”

And straightway he throws back great gates  
of cloud,  
And far within, lo ! walls of diamond,  
Streets of a new-built city, and a crowd  
In robes of light pass in to see them  
crown'd.  
I hear, like torrents on the wind, their loud  
Acclaim, and “ Victory ! ” roll'd from  
bound to bound,  
“ Victory, victory ! ” and with that cry  
Death, like a flying shadow, vanish'd by.

I listen—and from out the shadows dun  
Far voices, as of triumph, flow to me,  
I hear great music soaring with the sun,  
And golden thunders eddying like a sea ;  
To that immortal revel I will run  
And stand beneath the rushing light, and  
see  
Those peaceful Giants, those twin kings of  
bliss  
Come down with wealth of other worlds to  
this !

## ARIEL

OH! could I borrow for a Summer's day,  
Ariel, thy strength and speed, I would  
ascend  
High as the utmost peaks, and thence extend  
My happy wings along the sunny way,  
And into realms of Wonder sail away!

First would I run to meet the Morn on high,  
And on the eldest beam wing back my  
flight,  
And set my foot together with the light  
On the haughtiest pinnacle, and with a cry  
Scare the lone eagles forth into the sky.

And on the chariot of a cloud supreme  
Ride o'er the mountain tops—o'er land and  
sea—  
And bathe my wings in sunbows, and be  
free  
To mark the cataracts leap, the torrents  
gleam,  
The avalanche burst away, the shadows  
stream.

With ancient beauty I would feast my soul  
And solitary terrors—without fear  
I would behold the yawning earth, and hear  
The quenchless fires go forth without  
control,  
And o'er the pines, and blazing cedars roll.

And I would leap impregnable to harms  
Into the Earthquake's cradle, and below  
Watch the eternal mystic furnace glow,  
And hark the shrieks, and cries, and dim  
alarms  
Far down, and clashing of infernal arms !

And on a shower of sunbeams I would pour  
Through a cloud-arch a song so piercing  
sweet  
Of Liberty and Life, that to their feet  
Blind captives springing from their dungeon  
floor  
Should hope to see an Angel at the door.

I would wake up the North wind from his  
sleep ;  
And take him by the hair and turn him  
back ;  
Or wait within the coming torrent's track ;  
And down from off a thunder-shaken steep  
Rush down with eager storms into the deep.

I would untwist the typhoon—I would dare  
The shattering hailstones, with unarmed  
hands  
Would pass between the Lightning's dazz-  
ling brands,  
And hear the gurgling streams and prison'd  
air  
Run up and down the spiral cloudy stair.

And o'er the wildernesses I would fly,  
See the sands whirl, and hear the Samiel  
scream,  
And swiftly skim along the ocean stream  
When the long calms are waking, and be  
nigh  
To mark the dim-eyed Hurricane rolling by.

To mark the sea thrown back from mountain  
shores  
Of basalt isles, or on swart deserts hurl'd ;  
Or lash'd along some cavern's echoing floor ;  
Fired by the sun, and by the tempest curl'd—  
Wonder, and dread, and glory of the  
World!

Then would I rise and part, and dwell awhile  
In palaces with walls of diamond builded,  
And spires by the unsetting sunlight gilded,  
And when the breath of summer shook the  
pile  
Sail south again upon a moving isle.

And I would scale, when Heaven began to  
throw  
Its fiery darts, great battlements of storms,  
And towers, and bulwarks bright with awful  
arms,  
And hear the dread winds, and the thunder  
flow  
Under the rainbow's arch afar below.

On streams of sunset with rose-islands glowing  
At Eve I'd sail, and in cloud-shadow wait  
Under the great emblazon'd western gate,  
To see the Sun pass in in haste with flowing  
Banners, and golden arms, and trumpets  
blowing.

And after sunset thorough dark and damp  
I would sink down beneath the sea and land,  
And catch a shooting star, and in my hand  
Bear it thro' caves of death, and with that  
lamp  
Wake up pale Gnomes, and Giants stiff with  
cramp.

And when my long day of delights was done,  
Unto a column of earth-lightning clinging  
That back unto a zenith cloud was springing,  
Smoothly I would go up, and slumber soon  
Wrapp'd in warm folds kiss'd by the  
Summer moon.

## TEN YEARS AGO

TEN years are swiftly fled since yesterday—  
For yesterday it seems ten years ago—  
Ah! loveless Time, that lovest not to stay,  
But still to other years as swift as they  
Onward and on the unebbing moments flow :

What were ten years to me ten years ago?  
A breath upon the lip—a skylark's song—  
A path thro' vales where the wild-roses  
grow—  
A winding shore where morning breezes  
blow—  
A cloud where hopes like triple rainbows  
throng.

What are they? ah! what are those happy  
hours,  
The fair ten years that stept so laughingly  
Wreathed like a bridal company with flowers  
In virgin white, from forth their secret  
bowers  
Into the gray morn of Futurity?

Alas ! into a gulf of weary cares  
I turn mine eyes—lo ! pale and dead they  
lie,  
And with the lonely lamp my Sorrow bears  
I read the death-look each sweet phantom  
wears,  
Until fresh-springing anguish fills mine  
eye.

The roses on their brows so brightly braided,  
Are cast into the swift and silent river ;  
The glossy love-locks that so richly shaded  
Their dimpling beauties all are gray and  
faded,  
The lovelight in their eyes is set for ever !

I'll sit beside your graves upon the shore,  
My songs shall murmur in your closed ears,  
No after years with smiles like those before  
Shall hear me breathe them love-vows any  
more,  
Since ye are not, O laughter-hearted years !



## MIDSUMMER EVE

MIDSUMMER Day was setting fair,  
Hope took young Hebe by the hand,  
He show'd her the bright earth and air,  
And led her where the sea-breeze fann'd  
Her brows, and cheek, and golden hair.

They gazed adown the valleys wild  
From off the topmost mountain steep,  
And saw the Sun, o'er mountains piled  
On mountains, pass into the deep  
Of purple waters purple-isled.

Towered clouds aloft were lying  
Amid the sunset's crimson flood,  
And the voice of day was dying  
Like the wind in cypresswood  
Softly, and more softly sighing.

They sang : " Let Sorrow close his eyes,  
Let wakeful Sorrow close his ears,  
Let nothing breathe but lovers' sighs,  
Let nothing fall but lovers' tears,  
While this sweet night is in the skies.

“ Over the dim and tranquil sea  
The blossoming boughs of young green  
trees  
Bending in the dusk air we see,  
And a Summer murmur flees  
Across the waves melodiously.

“ The heart of every burning star  
Is throbbing with a pulse of love,  
The little fireflies near and far  
From vineyard, harvest-vale, and grove,  
Make answer to the fires above.

“ Where glittering roofs of village towers  
Peer o'er yon moon-lit promontory,  
The nightingale from myrtle bowers  
Round about her flings a glory,  
In rushing notes, like fountain-showers.

“ The Oread from her mountain cell—  
The Dryad from her leafy nook—  
The Naiad from her arched well  
Lift up their heads, with magic strook  
Of that clear voice that sings so well.

“ Like raindrops in a moveless lake  
Those notes of triumph, clear and sweet,  
Around them golden circles make,  
Night listens on her starry seat,  
And loves to be awake.

“ Dry and dewless is the ground.  
Betwixt the shade of garden groves  
The city's lamps are flashing round  
Like a fiery sea that moves  
Far off, so far we hear no sound.”

They sang : “ Where fadeless Summers shine  
In this fair land we'll take our rest ;  
Where earthly beauty is divine,  
And Man is glad by Nature blest,  
We'll drink of Fancy's charmed wine.”

## LAMENT OF THE WOOD-NYMPHS

DEEP in the days of old,  
In the last autumn of the Age of Gold,  
With flying locks the Wood-nymphs pale  
Flock'd out of mountain-bower and echoing  
vale,  
While the long shadows fell, and day began  
to fail.

I heard the sound of weeping,  
And many tongues one mournful measure  
keeping ;  
“ Ah ! what hath darkened your sweet eyes ? ”  
I said—but they, with many tears and sighs—  
“ Earth's eldest born is dead, the star-eyed  
Phantasis ! ”

They sang : “ Fair days are o'er,  
Summer is songless, Summer is no more ;  
The golden time is fled away,  
Oh ! wherefore should the Beautiful delay  
After the shining wings of the last Summer's  
day ? ”

“ Oh ! he was born in spring,  
Born when the nightingales began to sing,  
And with his notes shook off the dews,  
And trembling morning drops of many  
hues,  
Like tears when tender love, and melting  
music sues.

“ The roses of the morn  
Were in his cheeks, and in his heart were  
borne  
April's odorous tender showers ;  
And as he lay among the blossoming  
flowers,  
He heard the coming songs of Summer's  
crowned Hours.

“ Alas ! when shall we see  
A heart like his, so bountiful and free ?  
No more for him at eve we wait  
Looking towards the silent City gate,  
Arms glimmer on the walls, and watch-fires  
desolate.

“ Along the abounding plain,  
Under the vines we look for him in vain ;  
Alas ! he sits and sings no more  
With merry clowns beside the open door,  
And cheers their rugged hearts with mirth  
when toil is o'er.

“ We shall not look on him  
 Filling, as in the simple days of prime,  
 Mad boys and village maids with fun,  
 Or, ere the summer morn had well begun,  
 The good old souls that ply the distaff in  
 the sun.

“ Nor, when the lamps are lit,  
 Amid the gentle-hearted will he sit  
 Making the midnight glad as day :  
 Alas ! the merry-hearted where are they ?  
 O'er desert, mount, and stream their bones  
 are cast away.”

At every pause they heard  
 The withering leaves with sighs of Autumn  
 stirr'd,  
 And murmurs, and low-tongued alarms,  
 Sad inarticulate notes of coming harms,  
 And from behind the hills the first strange  
 clash of arms !

When they had ceased, a maiden  
 With downcast eyes, soft as bluebells dew-  
 laden,  
 Lifting her head with sighs and showers  
 Of tears, stream'd her lone anguish thro'  
 the bowers,  
 Sweet as the odorous breath blown off from  
 stormy flowers :

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“ Ah me ! before he died  
With thin pale cheek he sate him by my side ;  
I bade him string the golden lyre ;  
Wanly he smiled—but soon my fond desire  
Drew from his lips and eyes the ancient  
holy fire.

“ ‘ Farewell, O friends, farewell  
O rocks, and rills, and wild greenwood, and  
fell ;  
O violet vales that breathe atween  
The craggy steeps ; and orchards soft and  
green ;  
In your beloved walks I shall no more be  
seen.

“ ‘ A fiercer hand than mine  
When I am dead shall strike the harp  
divine,  
Instead of Gods and Godlike men,  
Mountain, and river-shore, and dewy glen,  
His voice shall chant of blood and burning  
cities then.

“ ‘ Oh ! he shall sing of tears,  
Hearts wild with tumults, torn with griefs  
and fears,  
Of hatreds crouching near the hearth—  
Of strength an hunger’d—Beauty driven  
forth—  
And Genius fresh from Heaven a wanderer  
on the Earth.

“ ‘ And yet the days shall be  
 That once again I shall revisit ye ;  
 Far off those Summer days are burning ;  
 Like sunlight ’twixt the thunders, my re-  
 turning  
 Shall make Time’s latter Eve more glorious  
 than his Morning.

“ ‘ The ancient Twins of Death :  
 War with red wings, and Plague with burn-  
 ing breath,  
 Giants clothed with fear and wonder,  
 Under the abysses shall be bolted—under  
 All Chaos, swathed with fire and lock’d with  
 tenfold thunder ! ’ ”

At every pause they heard  
 The withering leaves with sighs of Autumn  
 stirr’d ;  
 And from the ancient mountain height  
 Swept down a great host, like a cataract  
 bright,  
 Plumed like a stormy sea, their lances  
 starr’d with light.

Then o’er the virgin quire  
 One raptured voice rose like a stream of fire :  
 “ Mourn not—sing a joyful hymn—  
 For tho’ the earth without his eyes be dim,  
 He sees the ancient Gods—oh ! who can  
 weep for him !



“ The happy days are o'er ;  
 Summer is songless, Summer is no more ;  
 The golden time is fled away,  
 Oh ! wherefore should the Beautiful delay  
 After the shining wings of the last Summer's  
 day !

“ Oh ! he is gone afar,  
 Where blissful hues of Morn for ever are ;  
 Under his feet the Immortals lay  
 Their rosy palms in glory, and upstay  
 His happy ghost along the sunlight's daz-  
 zling way !

“ Early this very morn  
 Voices of Gods adown the woods were  
 borne ;  
 I saw a sunbeam stair descend,  
 And winged Giants from the steps did  
 lend  
 Their arms to lift him up where their bright  
 hosts attend.

“ Methought I did behold  
 The sunward gates of valved cloud un-  
 fold ;  
 There was a shout ! his quicken'd sprite  
 Girt by empyreal cohorts took its flight  
 With hymns and trackless speed ascending  
 into light !

“ The sound from Heaven did come  
 Of their delight, like thunder overcome  
 With sound of songs, and lightning-wise  
 Ten thousand faces shone into mine eyes,  
 Whose splendour blench'd the world with  
 fear and with surprise !

“ High up and wonderful,  
 Enthroned on wheels like rainbows orb'd  
 and full,  
 Glorious he sate with robe and crown,  
 Thro' cloudgates burst with sunrise shower-  
 ing down  
 Blossoms like stars—before him golden  
 trumpets blown !

“ And when the sound was hush'd  
 Of triumph, from between the clouds there  
 gush'd  
 Cool streams of heaven-born fragrancy  
 Full of the incense of the courts on high,  
 And smote upon my brows, and pass'd in  
 silence by !

“ And then a Voice did say,  
 ‘ This too is a beloved Son, to-day  
 He hath been borne to Paradise,  
 He hath done what he could, and now his  
 eyes  
 Look on the perfect light of Spirits pure  
 and wise ? ’ ”

When she had ceased, once more,  
 With failing voices sadder than before  
 They sang together, and the trees  
 Sway'd with low murmurs to the evening  
 breeze  
 That inland wafted up the wailing of the  
 seas :

“ Dead is he without pain,  
 His dust is fallen to the earth again,  
 Dead is our dear and faithful friend,  
 His dust shall with terrestrial beauty blend,  
 His soul be pour'd into the Spirit without  
 end.”

In that last hush they heard  
 The withering leaves with sighs of Autumn  
 stirr'd ;  
 Then came a shout from near and far,  
 Earthquake of throbbing hoof and rolling  
 car,  
 And thwart the glooming woods the fatal  
 flash of War.

They wept ; hill, vale, and shore  
 Echo their lamentation evermore ;  
 And then to inmost shades unseen  
 Fled silently, and from that hour have been  
 Unknown to mount, or glen, or forest  
 covert green.

## WINDS OF SPRING

IF sudden Summer shone with all her light,  
Who could abide her coming? and what  
eyes  
Awaking could affront the flaming skies  
Of morning, and not tremble at the sight?

Slowly She bends unto us from the height  
Of her enthronement, and unveils her crown  
With sovran sweetness as She steppeth  
down ;  
Love shades her triumphs, Mercy stays her  
might.

If, like the frosts of winter, Woe and Pain,  
And sharp Misfortune like the winds of  
Spring  
Were not, some flowers, most sweet in  
blossoming,  
Would not be gather'd in the world again.

Hope would not, like the early primrose,  
blow ;  
Nor Charity, like the violet on the plain ;  
Nor Faith, like the bright crocus dash'd  
with rain ;  
Nor Pity, like the pale bells in the snow.

Men would be Gods in their unchanging bliss,  
If Joy's midsummer zenith could be still  
Unshadow'd by a passing cloud of ill—  
And the high worlds unseen for light of  
this.

But, if the star of Gladness rose no more,  
Self-centred hearts would harden into stone.  
Life's sweetest lights from good and evil  
thrown  
Rise, like the rainbow 'twixt the sun and  
shower.

*Allegory*

## LOVE AND WAR

GREAT Chiefs met arméd Love in battlefield :  
Pride foremost smote him with his icy brand  
Upon the helm, but Love with fiery shield  
Fenced his proud heart, then slew him hand  
to hand.

In ever-dwindling circles spinning round  
Flattery shot barbed arrows, but Love  
made  
Opposite circles, and escaped a wound.  
Learning fell in the pitfalls he had laid.

Hypocrisy had copied from a Saint  
The fashion of his armour, and to wield  
A sword of lath ; with cries and clamours  
quaint  
He moved, and bade the King of Nature  
yield.

Love laugh'd—and by the wind of his disdain  
The motley panoply was blown away  
With a dry sound, like chaff along the plain,  
And left the evil Giant lean and gray.

Imagination toss'd his plume so high,  
And came so fiercely, Love half fled away,  
And then returning did his mettle try,  
And found those dazzling limbs but mortal  
clay.

Wealth strode in golden armour bright and  
new,  
But was weigh'd earthward by the arms he  
wore ;  
Nobility in rusty iron blew  
A brazen trump and loud—and nothing  
more.

Simplicity was found without a heart,  
And Cunning without prowess ; Beauty  
cast  
A silken net, and aim'd a soundless dart ;  
Love rent her toils with blazing shafts, and  
pass'd.

The Muses came with songs—a faithless  
band—  
And perish'd on his lightning-pointed  
spear ;  
But Pity lifted an unarmed hand,  
And the proud God disarm'd at sight of  
her.

## MORNING AND MUSIC

I HEARD one morning of the sunny May  
Music and songs, while southern winds were  
blowing,  
And gazing up I saw the sunlight flowing  
From fiery-skirted clouds whose deep array  
Shone like a plumed triumph on its way ;  
And ever as the soaring harmony  
Fulfill'd with jubilee the golden day  
An inner voice came to me from the sky :

“ There is a glory which thou canst not see,  
There is a music which thou canst not hear ;  
But if the spaces of Infinity  
Unroll'd themselves unto thine eye and ear,  
Thou wouldst behold the crystal dome above  
Lighted with living splendours, and the sound  
Of their great voices uttering endless love  
Would sink for ever thro' the vast profound ;

“ So was it when the Stars of Heaven did sing  
With joy together for the new-made Earth,  
And so it shall be when He measures forth  
Justice and Mercy, our Almighty King.



As when the mystic mighty Works begun  
 A vaster glory round about them shone,  
 The selfsame, when the evil Days are done,  
 Shall light thee up to the Eternal Throne!

“ Behold, by the free winds the clouds are  
     blown  
 Into vast shapes, and glorified with light ;  
 The sound with wonders peoples all that sight,  
 But 'tis thy Spirit binds all these in one ;  
 And that same Spirit free of fleshly thrall  
 Henceforth shall pasture its immortal bliss  
 On all things lovely gather'd out of all  
 The sunless worlds, as from the parts of this.”

Great things grew vast, and vastness infinite  
 To measure of that music—and I saw  
 As by new might of some unsealed Law  
 All worlds with all their songs, and confluent  
     light  
 Sail up to God and to the utmost Throne !  
 Each orb was crowned by its foremost man ;  
 Far into Night sidereal echoes ran,  
 Triumph, and song—like waters shoreward  
     blown.

## THE POET TO A CAGED NIGHTINGALE

IF I am sadder when I see thee sad  
With rayless eyes, O summer-hearted Bird,  
Why do I weep when I behold thee glad  
With inborn glory, and thy songs are  
heard ?  
And, O young minstrel, I have seen thee  
stirr'd  
With such immortal moments of delight,  
That thine enchanted Being hath appear'd  
To go forth on a carol, and take its flight  
In answer to the call of some Empyrean  
Sprite !

When in a moment as from dream awoke  
Thou didst begin to sing, and in such wise  
As when the prime, inviolate forests broke  
Forth into pæans, and with glad surprise  
Struck unimagined harmonies,  
And the new-fashion'd Earth upsent a noise  
Of tumult, and of praise, and from the skies  
Came down the manifold melodious voice  
Of Angels and of Gods that sang, "Rejoice !  
rejoice !"

POET TO CAGED NIGHTINGALE 63

And then descending from thy lofty tone,—  
Glorious, as some sweet tempest which in  
play  
Apollo hath upraised around his throne,—  
Mocking the thunder and the winds, thy  
lay  
Hath glided like a clear stream on its way,  
A clear stream rushing on a golden floor,  
And yet so swift that when I bade thee stay  
To run me once again the wild song o'er,  
In swifter notes were drown'd the notes that  
went before.

Then hast thou beat thy prison-house in vain  
With idle wings, and prideful angry eye,  
Because thy gladness had become a pain,  
And burn'd thee inly with its ecstasy ;  
As tho' thou didst complain—" Ah ! let me  
die,  
For I am happy, happy, happy, now,  
O ! let me wander forth upon the sky,  
And fill the light with songs—oh ! let me  
go  
Along the wide sunbeam, and hear the  
South winds blow !

" Know'st thou I came from Summers of the  
South ?  
Mine is a bluer air, a nobler sun.  
There are the friends and lovers of my  
youth,

64 POET TO CAGED NIGHTINGALE

Who shared my gladness till the day was  
done,  
And soothed my brief unrests. What hast  
thou done  
To snatch me from society so dear?  
Where are the flowers, and mountain trees  
whereon  
I sate, and sang for joy, and had no fear,  
While songs as sweet as mine were thrilling  
in mine ear?

“Do I not hear the everlasting Sea  
Whose murmur brings from the blue isles  
afar  
Tidings of the flown Summer unto me,  
And hearts that throb beneath a happier  
star?  
Oh! if strong love could sunder bolt and  
bar  
Then would I live again one Summer o’er,  
And lave my wings in quenchless light and  
air,  
My heart in blisses of my own sweet shore,  
Then flee where none should find, or cease  
for evermore.”

But when I have approach’d thee in thine hour  
Of darkness, and required with flattering  
tone  
Melody in thy heaviness, the power  
Of thine undying life to cheer my own,

POET TO CAGED NIGHTINGALE 65

A song when thou wert desolate and lone,  
Dear minister of Pity, hast thou not  
The sweetness of thy saddest thoughts for-  
gone  
To move me in my sorrow, and forgot  
Captivity and tears—the burthen of thy lot?

Ah me! I weep that thou, ordain'd for mirth,  
To wander on wild wings, rejoice and soar,  
And search with restless speed the Heaven  
and Earth,  
To sing, to dream, to die, and be no more,  
In darkness, and behind a dungeon door  
Canst triumph like an Angel, while I mourn,  
Who know that I shall never die, and more  
Than Phantasy may vision, and yet can turn  
From all I see and know, and feel myself  
forlorn.

I weep that Man with utterance more than  
thou,  
A Soul that searcheth farther than the wind,  
A Mind that thro' the windows in his brow  
Can follow after the flown star, and find,  
And from the shore of Time can see behind  
Columns of fall'n Creations, and before  
The great new Day whose coming splendours  
blind,  
Should stoop for glistening serpents on that  
shore,  
Nor see the coming tide, nor listen to its roar.

66 POET TO CAGED NIGHTINGALE

Sing me no songs, for I am sad at heart,  
Thou art from God, and bountiful like  
Him,  
But when I see thee mute as now thou art,  
It is as tho' thou saidst—" Mine eyes are  
dim  
Thro' Man, whose heart is bitter to the  
brim,  
Who hates the light, and poisons his own  
food,  
Who was the next unto the Seraphim,  
And now a bird can chide his thankless  
mood,  
A little bird can say—" He envies me my  
Good.' "

Go forth, O winged Joy. What, shall I break  
That liberal heart of thine, because my own  
Lies quench'd in dust and ashes? I will  
wake  
The God that sleeps within me, and put on  
The long-disused arms that might have  
shone  
Among sublimer Spirits, and be free.  
Go forth in light ; in love thou hast undone  
Thine hopeless Ill, and slain Adversity,  
I thank thee for the shame thy songs have  
left in me.

## PAST AND FUTURE

THERE were some thoughts which made the  
new-born Time  
Stretch forth its arms unto the Infinite,  
And mighty Nature in her godlike prime  
From this poor earth climb to the gates of  
light !

When the first Prophet in his cavern shade  
Heard the great voices of Futurity  
Knoll like far thunders, and was not afraid—  
And cycles rolling like the tide o' the  
Sea!

When the first Lawgiver in the Holy Land  
Came forth from cloud and fire with awful  
eye,  
And show'd the Tablets written with God's  
hand  
To that astonish'd Host at Sinai !

When the first Poet in a blessed clime  
Saw Heaven unfold, and spirits earthward  
borne,  
And in the pauses of his voice sublime  
Heard Glory streaming like the winds at  
morn !

When the first Orator with arméd soul  
Stood like a present God of human minds,  
And saw the passions of a People roll  
Beneath him, like a sea before the winds !

When the first Patriot clothed in dust and  
blood  
Rode by the walls of his own native town,  
And look'd upon the citizens, as they stood  
Thundering his name, and flinging garlands  
down !

But Thou shalt be more glorious than all these  
Who shalt subdue Despair by any art,  
Whose hand shall cope the pyramid of  
Peace,  
And heal again sad Nature's broken heart ;

Shalt make Man walk, as if his God were near,  
Stirr'd in the winds, and lighten'd in the  
sky ;  
And pale Guilt trembling with a sudden  
fear  
Whisper unto his fellow—" He is by ! "



Shalt lead Truth to her throne without the  
might  
Of steel to force, or music to persuade,  
Show Beauty changed into her acolyte,  
And all the Muses at her footstool laid :

Teach Pride to weep—teach Sorrow spells of  
cheer—  
Teach all to feel a portion of that zeal  
Ray'd from the Lamp upheld by Love and  
Fear,  
Which Prophets felt, which raptur'd Poets  
feel !

Thou who shalt make unarméd Love to wield  
The World's wide Empire, King without  
a throne,  
Stronger than Death to vanquish or to  
shield,  
A silent Presence crown'd with Light alone!

## NOON. THE WATER-CARRIER

THE winds are hush'd, the clouds have ceased  
to sail,  
And lie like islands in the Ocean-day,  
The flowers hang down their heads, and far  
away  
A faint bell tinkles in a sun-drown'd vale:  
No voice but the cicala's whirring note—  
No motion but the grasshoppers that leap—  
The reaper pours into his burning throat  
The last drops of his flask, and falls asleep.

The rippling flood of a clear mountain-stream  
Fleets by, and makes sweet babble with the  
stones,  
The sleepy music with its murmuring tones  
Lays me at noontide in Arcadian dream ;  
Hard by soft night of summer bowers is  
seen,  
With trellised vintage curtaining a cove  
Whose diamond mirror paints the amber-  
green,  
The glooming bunches, and the boughs  
above.

NOON. THE WATER-CARRIER 71

Finches, and moths, and gold-dropt dragon-  
flies

Dip in their wings, and a young village-  
daughter

Is bending with her pitcher o'er the water.

Her round arm imaged, and her laughing  
eyes,

And the fair brow amid the flowing hair,

Look like the Nymph's for Hylas coming  
up,

Pictured among the leaves and fruitage  
there,

Or the boy's self a-drowning with his cup.

Up thro' the vines, her urn upon her head,

Her feet unsandal'd, and her dark locks  
free,

She takes her way, a lovely thing to see.

And like a skylark starting from its bed,

A glancing meteor, or a tongue of flame,

Or virgin waters gushing from their springs,

Her hope flies up—her heart is pure of  
blame—

On wings of sound. She sings! oh how  
she sings!

## THE PHANTOM

LAST even, when the sun was low,  
I walk'd, where those bright waters flow,  
Where we two wander'd long ago ;

With sad, slow steps I linger'd o'er  
The ancient woods, the river-shore,  
Where thou, alas ! art found no more ;

The winds that shook the dying flowers,  
The echoes stirring in the bowers,  
Seem'd as the voices of those hours ;

With raptur'd eyes I pierced the gloom,  
With tears that might have thaw'd the tomb  
I cried unto thy Spirit, " Come."

" Come forth," I cried, 'twixt hope and fear,  
" It is the hour when none are near,  
Oh ! come, belovéd, meet me here."

The sere leaves flitting in the dell  
Whisper'd scornfully, as they fell,  
"Death is Death, immutable."

"Thou that would'st with impious haste  
Call the Spirit from the vast  
Of Nature, and recall the past ;

"Can thy love unlock the earth?  
Canst thou bid dry bones come forth,  
And give dead dust another birth ?

"Relume the flowers that fallen be,  
Bring back the odours as they flee,  
Or set the sere leaf on the tree ?

"If the soul might come to-day  
And with its old companions stay,  
And tell them what the Angels say,

"Such converse could'st thou live and bear,  
That deep-eye'd presence standing there  
Love, even Love would never dare.

"Weep not the past, but hope instead ;  
Mourn not, nor be discomforted,  
The Living cannot love the Dead."

The low winds murmur'd, as they went,  
"Sigh not, weep not, be content,  
Death is Death, can he relent ?"

Still I cried, 'twixt hope and fear,  
“ It is even, none are here,  
Awake, belovéd—come a-near.”

Was it sad fancy's dreaming eyes,  
Or an answer to my sighs?  
Methought I saw a shadow rise.

Slowly it pass'd into the gray,  
With mournful eyes half turn'd away ;  
And I heard a pale voice say,

In tones beyond imaginings,  
As when the wind with tangled wings  
Is fluttering amid tuneful strings,

“ The Living cannot know the dead,  
But the spirit that is fled  
In good things past is perfected :

“ The bliss of life it felt before  
Thrills the Spirit o'er and o'er,  
Love increaseth more and more ;

“ Never sorrow, never fear ;  
I am near thee, ever near,  
Wakeful, more than eye or ear ;

“ Sometime, dearest, we shall greet  
Each other in this valley sweet—  
The Future and the Past shall meet ;

“Sometime, we shall linger o’er  
These ancient woods, this river-shore,  
These walks where I am found no more ;

“Sometime, when the sun is low,  
We shall wander, well I know,  
Where we two wander’d long ago.”

## DEATH AND THE SHEPHERD

UNDER the forest roof the faint wind dies,  
The birds are still—the echoes are asleep—  
And thro' the arches green the sunbeams  
    creep  
Floating the dizzy gnats, and lazy flies.  
An aged shepherd in an oaken shade  
Lay drowsily, and down the mossy ways  
He turn'd his dreaming eyes, and with  
    amaze  
He saw fair shapes, half glad, and half  
    afraid :

Shrill laughter from the gröt is flooding forth  
Of two wild Oreads, whose large eyes shine  
Under clear temples shaded with the vine,  
And good Silenus yields him to their  
    mirth ;  
His arms are fetter'd in a jasmin band,  
Forth from the curtains of each slumbrous  
    lid  
Shoot stars of joyaunce, often as they bid,  
And the red cup is fallen from his hand.



DEATH AND THE SHEPHERD 77

He heard sweet sounds—he saw the Graces  
dance—

“Ah! give me Youth, and I will give  
to ye

All my peace-offerings to Adversity”

He cried—and his white hair grew dark at  
once!

“’Tis well,” he said—“but what is flowing  
hair

And strength, without the blisses fed by  
gold?

Plutus, for thee the firstlings of my fold

I will provide, so thou wilt hear my  
prayer.”

And from amid the boughs the auspicious  
God

Silently stretching forth his potent hand

Flash’d in that Shepherd’s eyes a golden  
wand—

As ’twere a sunbeam floating in the  
wood;

And therewithal was struck the cavern’d  
rock

Hid in wildflowers and brambles o’er his  
head,

And when he look’d for dust, there rain’d  
instead

Some fair round pieces down upon his  
flock.

78 DEATH AND THE SHEPHERD

Between the knotty boles brown Satyrs  
 glanced,  
 And star-eye'd Fauns—and Momus leaping  
 out  
 From the dark umbrage with an antic shout  
 Made sport before the Nymphs when they  
 had danced :

Again he said—"O gentle Momus, hear,  
 I cannot laugh with them, nor yet be  
 merry,  
 For I have thoughts within I cannot bury—  
 Grant that, and thou shalt have three goats  
 a year."

From the dry leaves he started up in haste—  
 He danced, and laugh'd and laugh'd and  
 danced, but still  
 His heart remain'd the selfsame seat of ill,  
 And cruel Conscience mock'd him with the  
 Past.

"Oh! for some charm," he cried, "where-  
 with to cheat  
 Relentless Memory! when the heart is evil  
 Nothing's so cheerless as a merry Devil,  
 My heavy thoughts are fetters to my feet."

A cold wind sigh'd among the trees, and  
 Death  
 Lifted his crown'd head o'er a branch of  
 pine,  
 Screening his arm'd hand in leaves of vine—

DEATH AND THE SHEPHERD 79

Softly, "Why prayedst thou not to me?"  
he saith :

"Oh! whatsoe'er thou art," the old man  
cried,

"I have done deeds that haunt me, in my  
youth ;

Yield me, pale Power, oblivion of the  
Truth,

That I may live!" Death touch'd him,  
and he died !

## TWENTY-FIRST OF SEPTEMBER

'Twas noon—and festal voices loud  
Sang jubilee in Heaven ;  
Through arches of illumined cloud  
Into the deep the music flow'd,  
And shook the folded doors of morn and  
even.

They sang, “ Oh ! let no heart be aching,  
While Beauty lives on high ;  
This one more day to merrymaking  
We'll give, for summer is forsaking  
Her sun-lit tabernacle in the sky :

“ Oh ! think not of morn or evening,  
Think only of bright noon ;  
Think not of Winter or of Spring—  
While yet the summer breezes sing  
These hours are young and beautiful as  
June ! ”

The feast in those serene abodes  
 Wax'd dull ; Apollo sings  
 To slackening chords ; the Thunderer  
 nods ;  
 And Hebe leaves the drowsy Gods  
 To fill her chalice at the unfailing springs ;

Her step was fleet, her heart a-wing,  
 The afternoon was bright ;  
 "One draught," she sang, "of mine own  
 spring  
 Laughter, and melody shall bring  
 Back to their lips, and they shall sing  
 till night."

Why doth she pause with open mouth,  
 And fling her garlands down ?  
 Whom sees she by the fount of Youth,  
 Tall as a tempest from the south,  
 And shadowing all the waters with his  
 frown ?

She look'd but once—she look'd no more  
 Upon the vision dread ;  
 She fear'd the amaranth walks of yore,  
 The lawns, the bowers she loved before ;  
 She flung away her bowl, she shriek'd,  
 she fled !

On the gold threshold in dismay

She fell, and out of breath ;

“ Alas ! what hast thou seen to-day ? ”

They cried—“ why faint and pale, oh !  
say ? ”

Sadly she answer'd, “ I have look'd on  
Death ! ”

## THE HOLYTIDE

THE days are sad, it is the Holytide ;  
When flowers have ceased to blow, and  
birds to sing,  
Where shall the weary heart of Man abide,  
Save in the jocund memories of the Spring?  
As the gray twilight creeps across the snow,  
Let us discourse of walks when leaves  
were green.  
Methinks the roses are more sweet that blow  
In Memory's shade, than any that are seen.

The days are sad, it is the Holytide—  
Drear clouds have hid the crimson of  
the West,  
And, like the wingéd day, Delight hath died  
Within me, and proud passions gone to rest.  
In this dusk hour, before the lamps are lit,  
Through the heart's long long gallery I  
will go,  
And mark pale Memory's taper fall on it  
Startling strange hues, like firelight on  
the snow.

The days are sad, it is the Holytide—  
 Ye, whom I may not see for evermore,  
 Oh! I will dream, tho' Death's great waste  
   is wide,  
 That ye may hear me from your silent  
   shore.  
 And ye who wander, and are far apart  
 (Oh! this great World is bleak, and years  
   are growing),  
 I have a sunny corner in my heart  
 Where I do set ye when rough winds are  
   blowing.

The days are sad, it is the Holytide—  
 Let Wealth, and Glory, as they take  
   their fill,  
 Think how Mischance to Fortune is allied,  
 Let Hope look up again thro' cloud of ill :  
 Let us look down into our children's eyes,  
 And think, amid the mirth and festal flow,  
 How once we were as they are—think  
   with sighs  
 Of them that were as we are, long ago.

The days are sad, it is the Holytide—  
 Hark! in the drifting tempest and the  
   roar  
 Of darkling waters, are the Powers that  
   guide  
 The wreck of Nature to a summer shore ;



Let Man too in the darkness arm, and  
strive  
With the dark host within him, rise and  
fight,  
And, ere the morrow morn, begin to live ;  
Sorrow brings strength, as Day is born of  
Night.

The days are sad, it is the Holytide—  
The sun is on the hearth, the world at  
home,  
Over the frozen heath the whirlwinds ride ;  
Drink to the Past, and better days to come ;  
Wreathe we our goblets with the evergreen,  
Fadeless as Truth, sad as Humanity ;  
Let no bright flower, nor wither'd leaf  
be seen,  
These hours are sisters to Adversity.

The days are sad, it is the Holytide—  
The Winter morn is short, the Night is long,  
So let the lifeless hours be glorified  
With deathless thoughts, and echoed in  
sweet song ;  
And thro' the sunset of this purple cup  
They will resume the roses of their prime,  
And the old Dead will hear us, and  
wake up,  
Pass with dim smiles, and make our hearts  
sublime !

The days are sad, it is the Holytide—  
Be dusky mistletoes, and hollies strown,  
Sharp as the spear that pierced His sacred  
side,  
Red as the drops upon His thorny crown ;  
No haggard Passion, and no lawless Mirth  
Fright off the sombre Muse—tell sweet  
old tales,  
Sing songs, as we sit bending o'er the  
hearth,  
Till the lamp flickers, and the memory fails.

The days are sad, it is the Holytide—  
But ere we part this blessed night, to dreams  
Of Angel songs on the hush'd mountain-  
side,  
And wondrous Shapes that came upon  
the light,  
Let us lift up our voices all together  
In one deep harmony, a rapt farewell,  
So sweet we shall not hear the stormy  
weather,  
And dying Sorrow wake to hear it swell !

## PEACEFUL REST

IF they shall say, " He had no task on earth,"  
And if no soul reanimate my dust,  
No record like the memory of the Just  
Circle my name—that is not of a worth  
To claim renown or leave regret behind ;  
Then, Nature, mould thou of my broken clay  
A little plot against the western wind  
Not quite within, nor all apart from day ;  
Which violets blue may shadow with their bells :  
And haply in some far millennial year,  
When Hate hath fled away with Evil and Fear,  
And War is dead, and Love among us dwells,  
Haply, on some Spring morn of golden hours,  
Thy gracious hand shall bid me gently forth  
From painless slumbers underneath the flowers,  
And show me the new Heaven, and promised  
Earth.

## A DREAM OF AUTUMN

It is a golden morning of the spring,  
My cheek is pale, and hers is warm with  
bloom,  
And we are left in that old carven room,  
And she begins to sing ;

The open casement quivers in the breeze,  
And one large musk-rose leans its dewy  
grace  
Into the chamber, like a happy face,  
And round it swim the bees ;

She stays her song—I linger idly by—  
She lifts her head, and then she casts it  
down,  
One small, fair hand is o'er the other  
thrown,  
With a low, broken sigh ;

I know not what I said—what she replied  
Lives, like eternal sunshine, in my heart ;  
And then I murmur'd, “ Oh ! we never part,  
My love, my life, my bride ! ”

And then, as if to crown that first of hours,  
 That hour that ne'er was mated by another—

Into the open casement her young brother  
 Threw a fresh wreath of flowers!

And silence o'er us, after that great bliss,  
 Fell, like a welcome shadow—and I heard  
 The far woods sighing, and a summer bird  
 Singing amid the trees;

The sweet bird's happy song, that stream'd  
 around,  
 The murmur of the woods, the azure skies,  
 Were graven on my heart, though ears and  
 eyes  
 Mark'd neither sight nor sound.

She sleeps in peace beneath the chancel stone,  
 But ah! so clearly is the vision seen,  
 The dead seem raised, or Death had never  
 been,  
 Were I not here alone.

## DAY AND NIGHT

THOUGH utter darkness overcome the light  
Of moon-lit night ;  
Though cloudy thunders rise, and overrun  
The highway of the sun ;  
When their gloom hath pass'd away  
From the fair midnight and day,  
The happy sun returns unto the noon,  
And to her path in Heaven the saintly-  
stoled moon.

Though winter noons with sunlight and soft  
air  
Be still and fair ;  
Though summer midnights breathing breath  
of balm  
Be starry-bright and calm ;  
Soon the glory passeth by  
From the cold and stormy sky,  
And in sweet summer when the moon is  
down  
Unchangeable dread Night puts on her  
ancient frown.

So Good and Evil are not what they seem  
To the dark dream  
Of heart-sick Melancholy, or the madness  
Of overmuch of Gladness ;  
But like the moon and sun,  
Winter and night, they run  
Their steadfast courses farther than the  
sight  
Of Joy with dazzled eyes, or Sorrow with-  
out light.

## A DREAM OF SPRING

FAIRER than daughters of Mortality,  
Who cam'st in dream, and with a dream  
didst fly,  
I pray thee come before the day I die,  
Come once again to me ;

Come to me, O my Angel, as before—  
Come with thy golden smile illumining  
My sleep—come thou some twilight of the  
Spring  
Once more, blest Soul, once more !

I do remember well, it was the time  
When in the East pale rose begins to burn,  
And night-dews brim the lily's silver urn,  
And fresher breathes the clime ;

When the lone nightingale, that sang all night,  
Drowzes, and blossoms of the orange bower  
Pant in the still air, and the passion flower  
Unfolds her in the light ;



My thoughts were sad with musing of sad  
years  
Sung sweetly by a minstrel long departed,  
And with the sighs of him so gentle-hearted  
I mingled mine own tears ;

Strange were those tears—for I was glad and  
young—  
But he of Arqua made such long lament  
That pale Despair into my spirit went  
With echoes of his song ;

I laid my brow upon the book of sighs—  
Slowly I sank into a charming sleep  
While yet the tears his sorrows made me  
weep  
Were trembling in mine eyes ;

Sudden a glory fill'd the silence wide—  
A light more beautiful than summer noon,  
Warm as the sun, yet tender as the  
moon,  
And drown'd me in its tide !

It pour'd into the void—it swathed the  
bowers—  
It bathed the earth like bliss from Paradise—  
It came with melody impregn'd, and sighs  
Of young unfolding flowers.

From underneath hush'd walks of dewy vine,  
 And coverts of soft roses, thou didst rise  
 Into my chamber open to the skies,  
 With that wing'd heart of thine ;

And from thine eyes didst thro' mine eyelids  
 pour  
 Soft lightnings, that within me tremble yet,  
 Fringing sad clouds with their reflection  
 sweet,  
 Since that immortal hour ;

I look'd upon thy face, and lo ! thereon  
 The shape of mine own Soul—whate'er of  
 me  
 Slept folded up in Personality  
 Was there transfused, and shone ;

Melodies, that with inarticulate tone  
 Wander'd within me, wondering whence  
 they sprung,  
 Heard music in the magic of thy tongue,  
 Strange echo of their own ;

Raptures, that in a moment live and die—  
 Shades from the Past—prophetic voices  
 low—  
 Glories, that like still lightnings come and  
 go—  
 Love, Anguish, Ecstasy ;

Dim thoughts, that reach us from the Infinite,  
Faint as far seas, or twilight in eclipse,  
Flow'd forth like noonday waters from thy  
lips,  
And from thy brows like light !

I heard thee speak—swift utterance, clear and  
low—  
Thou leanedst over me, and in mine ear  
Breathedst such tender notes that still I  
hear—  
Oh ! could I see thee now !

Didst thou not say?—methought I heard  
thee say,—  
“ Beloved (words ah ! desolate, and sweet),  
Alas ! in thy sad World we cannot meet,  
Or in the light of Day ;

“ But, O beloved, I will hold for thee  
A happy Isle, beyond the Worlds forlorn,  
Beyond the golden rivers of the Morn,  
Deep in the starry sea.

“ I am the Spirit that hath onward led  
Thy mortal steps, the Being that shall be  
Hereafter loved by thee, and only thee,  
The Soul thy Soul shall wed ;

- “ Before the bases of the World were laid,  
Or bloodless dust awoke unto the Sun,  
The secret Spirit of the Highest One  
Knew all things He hath made ;
- “ The thoughts of God were harmonies to be—  
Music and light—the waters and the wind—  
And Souls ordain'd their perfect life to find  
In perfect sympathy ;
- “ And though all Nature mourn as one be-  
reaved,  
And mystic shadows cross the mystic plan,  
Doubt not, the Life of Things, and Soul of  
Man  
Shall end, as preconceived ;
- “ As distant stars draw influence from each  
other,  
Soul, counterpart of Soul, tho' far apart,  
Still trembles to its fellow, more than heart  
Of brother unto brother.
- “ This night thou sawest one in the zenith  
shine—  
Its light had travell'd for a thousand years ;  
So doth my Soul, drawn by thy sighs and  
tears,  
Flow ever unto thine ;

- “ The Star thou sawest hath been extinguished  
A thousand years—yet still behold it  
burn ;  
So shall thy thoughts, which ever to me turn,  
Live after thou art dead ;
- “ For thou must die, and change—thou must  
be cast  
Upon the torrent of the ebbless flood,  
Change is the Life of Life, the pulse of God,  
The soul of the dead Past ;
- “ Thou hast seen seas shrunk from their ancient  
bed—  
Thou hast seen wastes where forests stood  
of old—  
Thou hast seen mountains from their places  
roll’d—  
Great suns are vanished ;
- “ Still Change drives onward mighty things  
and small,  
The nations of the past are silent now,  
And yet a few more vexed years, and thou  
Shalt cease to be at all ;
- “ Not all thy love for me, fond heart, nor mine  
For thee, not all the rapture in thy spirit  
Will stay the doom thou, mortal, must  
inherit—  
Thy soul must flee to mine.

“ Weep not, nor be disquieted in vain—  
Behold the noise of human deeds hath  
ceased,  
And the Eternal Spirit hath released  
Thy life from Fear and Pain ;

“ All mortal Passions in thy mighty Mind  
Are dead—but Hope hath got her other  
wings  
To soar beyond all vain imaginings,  
And leave the stars behind,

“ Far as the Seas surpass a drop of rain—  
Far as the boundless Winds thy little  
breath—  
Far as unbounded Life thy World of  
Death,  
Or Gods the strength of Men ! ”

That music ceased—I felt my forehead thrill  
With touches of those lips ; the immortal  
fire  
Seem'd all my frame that moment to inspire  
With life that lingers still !

Slowly her beauty faded from my view,  
Ev'n as a silver star that bathes its light  
In the slow-gathering dews and breath of  
night,  
As back to Heaven she flew ;

“Spirit,” I cried, when I beheld that sight,  
With struggling sobs, like voice of drown-  
ing men,  
Or one that meets the wind—“Oh! turn  
again,  
And answer me aright,

“How long, how long shall I lament for thee,  
Upon the torrent of Destruction cast  
Into the cold, illimitable Vast,  
O blest Affinity?”

Another Voice, it still'd the heart to hear,  
Far off, as from behind the walls of  
Time,  
Spake, and in echoes tender and sublime  
Waved to the utmost sphere,

“Love cannot die—empyreal and divine.  
As viewless atoms into systems grow,  
As the fire-winged worlds together flow,  
Her soul shall flow to thine!”

Just then above great walls of towered cloud  
The glorious dawn like a world-whelming  
tide  
Roll'd earthward; even then I would have  
died  
Drown'd in that golden flood,

So that I might have follow'd where she went  
For ever diving thro' the endless light,  
And sunless years, to drink another sight  
Of such wild ravishment !

Angel of beauty, thou that once erewhile  
Didst visit me in dream, and with thine  
eyes  
Turnedst my darkness into Paradise,  
And with thy blessed smile ;

Fairer than daughters of Mortality,  
Who cam'st in dream, and with a dream  
didst fly,  
I pray thee, come to me the day I die,  
And take me back with thee !





## THE CHURCHYARD

THE hour is past, the solemn words are said,  
The earth hath closed upon another man,  
He through the woes of fourscore winters  
ran

And knew not often where to lay his head ;  
Few stay'd to mark him living, foe, or  
friend,  
And fewer still are they that mourn his end.

Haply a widow'd wife, or orphan child  
Have shed upon his bleak, unhonour'd bier,  
Feeling's last treasure, penury's frozen tear,  
Then turn'd away with hungry eyes, and  
wild ;  
He hath no troubles, they are broken-  
hearted,  
Is sorrow more or less since they were  
parted ?

'Tis moonlight by the graves, a blessed sight ;  
Near marble tombs the longest shadows lie,  
The lowly bed of Age and Misery  
Is not a wall to intercept the light ;

While glittering histories inscribed on brass  
Make the wise neighbours mutter as they  
pass.

This poor man's memory, and his humble fame  
Are free from slander, ignorance, and scorn,  
They knew he died as poor as he was born,  
And no dishonour overcast his name ;  
While weeping Saint, and graven Angel  
plead  
In vain for noble sins, and proud misdeeds.

Last night a mighty man of dignities  
Was borne to silence ; through the sacred  
porch  
Nodded the pomp of Death with plume  
and torch,  
But curses follow'd him instead of sighs ;  
Rather than this, could he be born again,  
Would he not bear all griefs of homeless  
men ?

He clomb to honour o'er the best of men  
By that thwart stair whose slippery steps  
are lies ;  
For gold he feign'd in youth a lover's sighs,  
For power he coin'd his words, and coin'd  
again ;  
He spoke of charity, and ground the poor,  
Of freedom, and he scourged at home the  
more.

Love did not win his heart, nor hatred move,  
Nor angry threats, nor penitential tears,  
Though he could whisper into others' ears  
For his own sake both penitence and love ;  
He squander'd all that he had robb'd or  
won,  
Brook'd not the poor, yet beggar'd his own  
son !

One sleeps without, the other dreams within ;  
One in the chancel, one beneath the sod ;  
Both underneath the conscious eye of God,  
One fair as Truth, the other foul as Sin ;  
One a chain'd spirit, mock'd with gilded  
bars,  
One free as heaven, the sunlight, and the  
stars !

FROM "THE BIRTHDAY OF  
LOVE"

Two Kings met in a valley green,  
A land of harvests and of flowers,  
Beyond were fruitful hills and bowers,  
A river roll'd between.

What do they there with lance and helm,  
And corslets that shake off the light?  
Alas! their brows are black as night  
All in that pleasant realm.

What do they there, those frowning Kings,  
In that fair vale and laughing clime?  
Are they come forth to look for Him,  
And have they heard his wings?

Oh! they were brothers, and had been  
Nurs'd at one breast—and now they reign  
Each o'er one half of that rich plain,  
The river roll'd between.

Just shares were dealt them—none could  
blame

The true old King—but he was dead,  
And now they loved false hearts instead  
And tongues as shrewd as flame.

To each a traitor curved with days  
Had said—"Behold this Vale is one,  
And laws should issue from one throne  
To rule one tongue and race.

"And look from this shore to the other,  
Thy brother's fields bear more than thine,"  
He whisper'd, "both in oil and wine ;  
Thou art the elder brother."

So they have sworn upon their thrones  
An oath, to slay both son and sire,  
To reap the harvest with red fire,  
And sow the earth with bones ;

That all the blood of chief, or clown,  
That they may shed upon the earth,  
It but as water, less than worth  
The honour of their own.

Like thirsty flames above them roll'd  
Their banners, torn with ancient wars,  
Behind them, like a sea of stars,  
The lances bright and cold.

The God beheld them trampling down  
 The flowers, he saw the sparkling steel,  
 The warriors arm'd from head to heel,  
 He heard the trumpets blown :

And passing earthward from behind  
 An amber fold of morning cloud  
 To each dread Host he sign'd aloud  
 Hung midway in the wind.

Up toward that clear melodious breath  
 They raised their eyes into the blue,  
 But while they look'd, their lances grew  
 Into the earth beneath.

Their sword-blades into sickles bent,  
 Their battle-axes swiftly changed  
 To vine-hooks, all in order ranged,  
 While they look'd up intent.

And round about each iron shaft  
 The gay lithe tendrils clomb and swung  
 Fast as a lambent fiery tongue,  
 And golden clusters laugh'd.

The sweetest song that e'er had been  
 He sang—and when they turn'd again  
 To look upon those armed men,  
 They saw them not for green.

## TO APRIL

APRIL, April, child of Mirth  
And Sorrow, sweetest face on earth,  
Oh ! but to name thee fills mine ears  
With songs, mine eyes with pleasant tears :  
For so thou wert when I was young  
And call'd thee with a lispng tongue,  
So wilt thou be when I am old  
And Loves and Fears alike are cold.

Though others change, thou wilt not change ;  
But always something swift and strange,  
Like shadows follow'd by the sun,  
From thee across my heart shall run ;  
While the tender breath from thee  
Sheds life o'er turf and forest tree,  
Pours love-notes thro' the valleys lone,  
And brings me back the swallow flown.

To pale sad Grief thy presence seems  
A shape of light in mist of dreams ;  
Thou singest into the ears of Joy—  
He shakes his locks, the enchanted boy,

And the clouds soar up, and pile  
The vast with silver hill and isle,  
Or under golden arches run  
Great rivers pouring from the sun !

Oft as I mark thee stepping thro'  
The mist, thy fair hair strung with dew,  
Or by the great stair of the dawn  
Come down o'er river, croft, and lawn,  
Thy sun and cloud-inwoven vest  
Rippling its skirts from east to west,  
And glancing on the breeze and light  
Dash the wildflowers left and right.

Oft as in moments soft and fair  
Under the clear and windless air  
Thou sleepest and thy breathings low  
In blissful odours come and go ;  
Oft as in moments proud and wild  
Thou spoilest, like a froward child,  
The blossoms thou hast just laid on,  
And laughest when the ill is done.

Oft as I see thee run and leap  
From gusty peaks—or stand and weep  
Tears, like Memory's that distil  
Hopes of Good thro' days of Ill ;  
And the peaceful rainbow hides  
The thunders on the mountain-sides  
With its banner, or in the vale  
Robes in rich light the poplars pale,



While thy mavis, blithe and boon,  
Cheers the morn and afternoon  
With happy melodies that seem  
To turn to sound the sunny beam ;  
Or the nightingale apart  
Flashes from his human heart  
Like earth-born lightning, ceaselessly,  
Anguish, Hope, and Victory

In southern isles, where thro' balm shades  
The moonlight glides o'er colonnades  
Of marble, and the waters gush  
In tuneful tears, amid the hush  
Of budding bowers, that silently  
Slope thro' pale glory to the sea,  
And in the calm and midnight dim  
Seem listening to that threefold hymn.

April, April, child of Mirth  
And Sorrow, sweetest face on earth,  
Oh ! had I such bright notes to make  
The wildwoods listen for thy sake,  
Oh ! had I spells to make my pains  
My glory, like thy sun-lit rains,  
My days a rainbow's arch, to climb  
Far off from tears, and clouds of Time !

## THE BLIND MAN

I MET an old man, and his eyes were blind,  
But on his pale lips peace like moonlight  
shone,  
A little blue-eyed daughter led him on,  
And clothed with love of her his desert  
mind ;  
And whether thro' rough walks, or pleasant  
ways  
They fared, he was content while she was  
near,  
The very sunbeams lighting on his face  
Felt like the tender mercies ray'd from her.

His heart was full of her, for her delight  
Was to watch o'er him—when she laugh'd,  
his eye  
Trembled with pleasant tears, and sparks  
of joy ;  
And, when she spoke, her words became  
his sight ;  
And when she told of all those things  
which he

Had lost—the sun, the sea, the earth, and  
sky,  
In their great beauty and divinity,  
His listening soul seem'd starting from his  
eyes.

When she was parted, he would sit and sigh ;  
And yet he mourn'd not that his darken'd  
sense  
Veil'd from him this great World's magni-  
ficence,  
But that her loving spirit was not by ;  
To be her faithful record he was proud,  
Who was to him thought, memory, sense,  
and soul,  
He echoed inly what she spoke aloud,  
And thro' the love of her he felt the  
Whole.

He learnt the songs she sang, when they had  
been  
Thro' fragrant wood-walks wandering on  
together,  
Or in the twilight of the summer weather  
'Mid country-folk upon a village green ;  
And if she lost the words, the song's sweet  
sound  
Unlock'd his heart as with a golden key,  
And surely there the missing thought was  
found  
In the rare casket of his memory.

## THE BIRTH OF THE YEAR

LET us speak low, the Infant is asleep,  
The frosty hills grow sharp, the Day is  
near,  
And Phosphor with his taper comes to peep  
Into the cradle of the new-born Year ;  
Hush ! the infant is asleep,  
Monarch of the Day and Night ;  
Whisper, yet it is not light,  
The infant is asleep.

Those arms shall crush great serpents ere  
to-morrow,  
His closed eyes shall wake to laugh and  
weep ;  
His lips shall curl with mirth, and writhe  
with sorrow,  
And charm up Truth and Beauty from the  
Deep ;  
Softly, softly let us keep  
Our vigils, visions cross his rest,  
Prophetic pulses stir his breast,  
Although he be asleep.

THE BIRTH OF THE YEAR 113

Now Love and Death arm'd in his presence  
wait,

Genii with lamps are standing at the door,  
Oh ! he shall sing sweet songs, he shall relate  
Wonder, and glory, and hopes untold  
before :

Murmur memories that may creep  
Into his ears of Eld sublime,  
Let the youngest-born of Time  
Hear Music in his sleep.

Quickly he shall awake, the East is bright,  
And the hot glow of the unrisen Sun  
Hath kiss'd his brow with promise of its  
light,  
His cheek is red with victory to be won ;  
Quickly shall our King awake,  
Strong as giants, and arise ;  
Sager than the old and wise  
The Infant shall awake.

His childhood shall be froward, wild, and  
thwart,

His gladness fitful, and his angers blind,  
But tender spirits shall o'ertake his heart,  
Sweet tears, and golden moments bland and  
kind :

He shall give delight and take,  
Charm, enchant, dismay, and soothe,  
Raise the dead, and touch with youth,  
Oh ! sing that he may wake !

Where is the sword to gird upon his thigh?  
 Where is his armour and his laurel crown?  
 For he shall be a Conqueror ere he die,  
 And win him kingdoms wider than his  
     own ;  
 Like the earthquake he shall shake  
 Cities down, and waste like fire,  
 Then build them stronger, pile them higher,  
 When he shall awake.

In the dark spheres of his unclosed eyes  
 The sheathed lightnings lie, and clouded  
     stars,  
 That shall glance softly, as in Summer skies,  
 Or stream o'er thirsty deserts wing'd with  
     wars.  
 For in the pauses of dread hours  
 He shall fling his armour off,  
 And like a reveller sing and laugh,  
 And dance in ladies' bowers.

Ofttimes in his midsummer he shall turn  
 To look on the dead Hours with weeping  
     eyes,  
 O'er ashes of frail Beauty stand and mourn,  
 And kiss the bier of stricken Hope with  
     sighs ;  
 Ofttimes like light of onward seas  
 He shall hail great days to come,  
 Or hear the first dread note of doom  
 Like torrents on the breeze.

THE BIRTH OF THE YEAR 115

His manhood shall be blissful and sublime  
With stormy sorrows, and serenest pleasures,  
And his crown'd age upon the top of Time  
Shall throne him, great in glories, rich in  
treasures.

The Sun is up, the Day is breaking,  
Sing ye sweetly, draw anear,  
Immortal be the new-born year  
And blessed be its waking !

## MIDSUMMER

A MIGHTY King a royal feast proclaim'd,  
And bade his Ministers go forth, and call  
From far and near unto that festival—  
“Ye Rich, make haste, ye Poor, be not  
ashamed !”

The fame of it was blown from East to West  
O'er Land and Sea—I heard it, and was  
glad ;  
I rose, my limbs in clean white raiment  
clad,  
That I might pass within, a welcome guest.

They call'd thro' Palace-gates, and crowded  
ways ;  
Some heard not, some were for a moment  
stirr'd,  
Some heard with scorn, and others with  
amaze,  
Some promised loud, and then forgot  
their word.



They sought the woods and hills, they pass'd  
along

The secret valleys, and the lonely sea ;  
The simple-soul'd, the tender, and the free  
Hail'd it with joy, and answer'd it with song.

The portals of the tempest are unbarr'd,  
The curtains of the clouds are drawn  
asunder,  
And show the banquet house of endless  
wonder,  
The Host hath sign'd—the banquet is  
prepar'd :

The lamps are lit, the music is begun ;  
What happy guests are present at that feast  
Of royal bounty spread from west to east,  
Beneath the purple hung with star and sun ?

Lo ! dropsied Luxury tasteth not his fare ;  
Lo ! quenchless Pride puts it untasted by ;  
Lo ! Envy feeds in vain his atrophy ;  
Lo ! Hate sits lean beside the Imperial  
chair.

But who are they on each side of the throne ?  
Truth, Hope, and Love—tho' they be  
lowly and poor,  
Each moment they are gladdening more  
and more,  
And fill their goblets from the Master's own.

## TIME AND THE HOUR

OF all the Children of old Time  
I chose the youngest, fairest Hour :  
"Oh ! leave with me this stormy clime,"  
I cried "and come into a bower  
Where our love-days shall be disturbed  
By neither sun nor shower.

"Low-murmuring leaves from outer day  
Screen it, and flowers with amorous twine  
Wreathe the full clusters of the vine ;  
Green walks go sloping toward a bay,  
Where the balmy azure isles  
In sunlight die away."

To sound of timbrel and of song  
All day I led Time's lovely daughter  
In a wild dance those groves along  
That look'd upon the waveless water,  
My reckless laugh she laugh'd again,  
She sang the songs I taught her.

Forsaken by the bleak wayside  
The ancient Ruler of the Sphere  
Sate in his sorrow and his pride ;  
She neither pity felt, nor fear,  
“ I'll go for him at eve ” she said,  
“ And bring him to us here.”

From under that enchanted shade  
We pass'd, and stood upon the shore ;  
'Twas eve—I look'd upon the maid,  
And lo ! her beauty was no more,  
Old was she, wrinkled, lame, and blind,  
And the sea began to roar.

We saw a sudden tempest roll  
The mountain clouds asunder,  
We heard the winds and waters howl,  
We saw the gardens tossing under,  
But on spread wings avenging Time  
Far off beyond the thunder !

## TO PHANTASY

O CHARMING Sprite, if thou wilt let thee down  
On beam, or sunbow from the morning sky,  
And shape thy bodiless Divinity  
But for a day, I'll give thee for thine own  
A Summer seat where choicest dreams  
shall crown  
Thy noonday musing, rock-born waters  
chime  
Oblivion, and the wingless Zephyrs climb  
But half the boughs by odours overthrown :

Here ev'n by day a holy silence broods,  
Save when the wind adream among the  
woods  
Wakes suddenly, and from green gulfs  
below  
Wafts up the sweet sighs of their hidden  
flowers,  
Sending a blissful shudder thro' the bowers,  
With the low song of rivulets in their flow,  
And then long hours again without a breath,  
But the lone love-song of the doves beneath.

I will unsandal thine immortal feet  
Amid the dimness of this hush'd retreat,  
And set them on a plot of dewy green  
So fresh to look on, and so soft to feel,  
The very sight, and touch of it shall heal  
Thy soul o'ertask'd with glories it hath seen,  
And serve thee under gloom of shadows  
cold  
A flashing drink in cups of woven gold.

Far off blown boughs shall dapple the deep  
sward  
With glooms, and thro' the leaves gold  
shafts shall lean  
Of peremptory light, and on the green  
Touch the dim flowers with blandest  
Summer stirr'd,  
Or the swift glitter of a passing bird ;  
And, ere the shadows swallow up the light,  
Thine eye shall seize the momentary flight  
Of eager hunters streaming by unheard.

When 'twixt dark bole and twinkling leaf  
is seen  
The throbbing light, and dizzy shapes  
are spun  
Out of the restless boughs, and westering  
sun,  
Thou wilt behold pale Daphne run between  
The evening trees with flown locks, or  
the Queen

Of Maidenhood go by with horn and hound,  
 Or Pan start up from slumber at the sound,  
 Or rose-wreathed Mænads whirl across the  
 green :

Or Ariadne with one shoulder bare,  
 Her mantle torn, like beautiful Despair,  
 Forlorn and wan, and mad with griefs  
 and fears,  
 While the crush'd roses wound her flying  
 heels,  
 Shunning the shouts, and riot, and onward  
 wheels  
 Of the young God who seeks her in her  
 tears ;  
 And with an eye lit like an evening star  
 Flush'd Evan bending to her from his car.

When o'er the West the ruddy bands are  
 lying,  
 And dark the groves without, and darker  
 still  
 The gloom within—thine ever-eager will,  
 Thy lens of wonder and rapt vision prying  
 Will see sweet shapes across the shadows  
 flying ;  
 And haply Cytherea with wild hair,  
 And lamp, that shows her beauty wan  
 with care,  
 In piteous quest of her Adonis dying.

I ask no other guerdon for my love,  
Than to lie hidden near thee in the grove,  
To hear thee touch thy harp, to hear thee  
sing,  
Or sigh, or whisper with the wind and  
stream ;  
Or sleeping, snatch from under the white  
wing  
That veils thine eyes, the murmurs of thy  
dream ;  
But, ere thou partest, Goddess, wise and fair,  
Spare me one leaf of Amaranth from thine  
hair.

## SUMMER AND WINTER

THE Poet said unto the Sage,  
“Thy heart is cold and still,  
Can Youth abide to think of Age?  
Can good things mate with ill?  
Can Nature draw untroubled breath,  
And live, and bear to look on Death?”

“I fear Him not upon the Sea,  
I fear Him not on shore,  
But oh, the quiet thought I flee—  
To die—and be no more!  
Can Health, and Riches, and Content  
Dream of still dust, and not lament?”

“Oh! that the Spirit might be free  
To pass without all pain  
From strength to strength—a tropic tree  
That blooms, and bears again,  
Before the worm and canker cling  
Unto the fadeless, former spring!”



- “ Or, if this world must fade away  
 From the dull ear and eye,  
 That I might soar to upper day  
 On some wild harmony,  
 And weepings, and farewells be drown'd  
 In thunder-tides of godlike sound !
- “ Or, that Heaven-gates might burst asunder,  
 And thro' the Infinite  
 I might, on wings of love and wonder  
 Die upwards into light !  
 And from on high, like lightning, see  
 The Worlds sink down with all that be ! ”
- “ When I was young that now am old,”  
 That aged man replied,  
 “ My heart was neither still, nor cold,  
 Mine eyes were full of pride ;  
 In strength unmatch'd, in thought sublime,  
 I laugh'd to scorn both Space and Time !
- “ Death struck my first-born—on that day  
 He was as tall as thou,  
 His limbs as strong, his heart as gay,  
 Such promise on his brow ;  
 The branch was struck, the trunk was left,  
 Ah ! misery, to be so bereft !
- “ Death came once more—he took my girl,  
 A spirit sweet as fair,  
 No mother had so rich a pearl,  
 No sire a rose so rare ;

Again, another branch was reft—  
The branch was struck, the tree was left.

“ Death came—and from my hearth at last  
He snatch'd my spouse, my all ;  
That mighty sorrow overpast,  
No other can befall ;  
But I am left, now they are gone,  
A lightning-blasted wreck, alone !

“ All things are equal to my sorrow,  
It neither ebbs nor flows,  
It hath no yesterday nor morrow,  
It can not win, nor lose ;  
And still I live, and draw my breath,  
I live,—but I can think on Death !

“ May will not listen to December,  
I would not have him hear—  
And yet my words thou wilt remember,  
For they will haunt thine ear,  
And with the dead flowers of thy Youth,  
Will mix the bitter leaves of Truth.

“ As the earth turns unto the sun,  
And from the sun again.  
Thy heart must through its seasons run,  
And pass from joy to pain ;  
But know—the spring, that withers here,  
No more on earth can reappear.

“ As winter showers bring back the leaf,  
As winter snows the green,  
The heart of man must taste of grief  
To be, what it hath been ;  
That grief though not on earth, shall bring  
Another, and a nobler spring.

“ Oh ! thou must weep, and in the rain  
Of tears, raise up the prime,  
And beauty of thy heart again,  
And toil, and fall with time ;  
And look on Fate, and bear to see  
The shadow of Death familiarly.

“ Thy noblest act is but a sorrow,  
To live—though ill befall ;  
Thy great reward—to die to-morrow,  
If God and Nature call ;  
In faith to reach what ear and eye  
Dream not, nor all thy phantasy ! ”

## FIRST OF MARCH

THRO' the gaunt woods the winds are  
shrilling cold,  
Down from the rifted rack the sunbeam pours  
Over the cold gray slopes, and stony moors,  
The glimmering watercourse, the eastern  
wold,  
And over it the whirling sail o' the mill,  
The lonely hamlet with its mossy spire,  
The piled city smoking like a pyre,  
Fetch'd out of shadow gleam with light  
as chill.

The young leaves pine, their early promise  
stay'd ;  
The hope-deluded sorrow at the sight  
Of the sweet blossoms by the treacherous  
light  
Flatter'd to death, like tender love betray'd ;  
And stepdames frown, and aged virgins  
chide ;  
Relentless hearts put on their iron mood ;  
The hunter's dog lies dreaming of the wood,  
And dozes barking by the ingle-side.

Larks twitter, martens glance, and curs from  
far

Rage down the wind, and straight are heard  
no more ;

Old wives peep out, and scold, and bang  
the door ;

And clanging clocks grow angry in the air ;

Sorrow, and care, perplexity, and pain

Frown darker shadows on the homeless one,

And the gray beggar buffeting alone

Pleads in the howling storm, and pleads  
in vain.

The field-fires smoke along the champaign  
drear,

And drive before the north wind streaming  
down

Bleak hill, and furrow dark, and fallow  
brown ;

Few living things along the land appear ;

The weary horse looks out, his mane astray,

With anxious fetlock, and uneasy eye,

And sees the market-carts go madly by

With side-long drivers reckless of the way.

The sere beech-leaves, that trembled dry  
and red

All the long Winter on the frosty bough,

Or slept in quiet underneath the snow,

Fly off, like resurrections of the dead ;

The horny ploughman, and his yoked ox  
 Wink at the icy blasts ; and beldams bold,  
 Stout, and red-hooded, flee before the cold ;  
 And children's eyes are blinded by the  
 shocks.

You cannot hear the waters for the wind ;  
 The brook that foams, and falls, and  
 bubbles by,  
 Hath lost its voice—but ancient steeples sigh,  
 And belfries moan, and crazy ghosts,  
 confined  
 In dark courts, weep and shake the  
 shuddering gates  
 And cry from points of windy pinnacles,  
 Howl thro' the bars, and plain among  
 the bells,  
 And shriek, and wail like voices of the Fates !

And who is He, that down the mountain-side,  
 Swift as a shadow flying from the sun,  
 Between the wings of stormy winds doth run  
 With fierce blue eyes, and eyebrows knit  
 with pride,  
 Though now and then I see sweet laughters  
 play  
 Upon his lips, like moments of bright  
 heaven  
 Thrown 'twixt the cruel blasts of morn  
 and even,  
 And golden locks beneath his hood of gray ?

Sometimes he turns him back to wave farewell  
To his pale Sire with icy beard and hair ;  
Sometimes he sends before him thro' the air  
A cry of welcome down a sunny dell ;  
And while the echoes are around him ringing,  
Sudden the angry wind breathes low and  
sweet,  
Young violets show their blue eyes at  
his feet,  
And the wild lark is heard above him  
singing !

## HARVEST HOME

COME, let us mount the breezy down,  
And hearken to the tumult blown  
Up from the champaign and the town ;

Lovely lights, smooth shadows sweet  
Swiftly o'er croft and valley fleet,  
And flood the hamlet at our feet ;

Its groves, its hall, its grange that stood  
When Bess was Queen, its steeple rude,  
Its mill that patters in the wood ;

And follow where the brooklet curls  
Seaward, or in cool shadow whirls,  
Or silvery o'er its cresses purls ;

The harvest days are come again,  
The vales are surging with the grain ;  
The merry work goes on amain ;

Pale streaks of cloud scarce veil the blue,  
Against the golden harvest hue  
The autumn trees look fresh and new ;



Wrinkled brows relax with glee,  
And aged eyes they laugh to see  
The sickles follow o'er the lea ;

I see the little kerchief'd maid  
With dimpling cheek, and bodice staid,  
'Mid the stout striplings half afraid ;

Her red lip, and her soft blue eye  
Mate the poppy's crimson dye,  
And the cornflower waving by ;

I see the sire with bronzed chest ;  
Mad babes amid the blithe unrest  
Seem leaping from the mother's breast ;

The mighty youth, and supple child  
Go forth, the yellow sheaves are piled,  
The toil is mirth, the mirth is wild !

Old head, and sunny forehead peers  
O'er the warm sea, or disappears  
Drown'd amid the waving ears ;

Barefoot urchins run, and hide  
In hollows 'twixt the corn, or glide  
Towards the tall sheaf's sunny side ;

Lusty Pleasures, hobnail'd Fun  
Throng into the noonday sun,  
And 'mid the merry reapers run.

Draw the clear October out ;  
Another, and another bout,  
Then back to labour with a shout !

The banded sheaves stand orderly  
Against the purple autumn sky,  
Like armies of Prosperity.

Hark ! through the middle of the town  
From the sunny slopes run down  
Bawling boys, and reapers brown ;

Laughter flies from door to door  
To see fat Plenty with his store  
Led a captive by the poor ;

Fetter'd in a golden chain,  
Rolling in a burly wain,  
Over valley, mount, and plain ;

Right through the middle of the town  
With a great sheaf for a crown  
Onward he reels, a happy clown ;

Faintly cheers the tailor thin,  
And the smith with sooty chin  
Lends his hammer to the din ;

And the master, blithe and boon,  
Pours forth his boys that afternoon,  
And locks his desk an hour too soon.

Yet, when the shadows eastward seen  
O'er the smooth-shorn fallows lean,  
And Silence sits where they have been,

Amid the gleaners I will stay,  
While the shout and roundelay  
Faint off, and daylight dies away ;

Dies away, and leaves me lone  
With dim ghosts of years ago,  
Summers parted, glories flown ;

Till day beneath the West is roll'd,  
Till gray spire, and tufted wold  
Purple in the evening gold :

Memories, when old age is come,  
Are stray ears that fleck the gloom,  
And echoes of the Harvest Home.

## SOLITUDE

No life was waking but the tiny coil  
Of creeping things, and the cool, rustling air,  
And melody of streams ; but Thou wert there,  
Thou sleepless Mother, at thy midnight toil ;  
I heard thee piling in the aery void  
The atoms thou shalt use in thunderstrife,  
And creeping thro' the dark stems by my  
side,  
And with thine unseen lightnings shaping  
Life.

I heard thy fingers busy with the dews  
Which Thou wert stringing near me—and  
on high  
Amid the steepled crags I heard thee sigh ;  
And from the hush of desolation loose  
The torrents, and the little rills. Down thro'  
The drowsy vales I heard thee lead the streams  
To slopes, and plots of flowers—ah ! then I  
knew  
That such low sounds were more than all my  
dreams.

Then flew to me o'er mountain, wood, and  
waste,

A silent-footed Messenger from far,  
That clave the hollow midnight like a star—  
A truthful Angel, sighing, as he pass'd  
“O Dreamer, Nature unto Time shall bring  
A race of Giants, tall as Gods to see,  
Whose winged strength from Earth to Heaven  
shall spring,  
And strangle all the Imps of Phantasy!”

## THE TEMPLE

A SHEPHERD-POET from a mountain-land  
Near a proud temple's open portal stood,  
By lavish streams of odours he was fann'd,  
And heard the hosannas of a multitude ;

The soaring temple seem'd a holy world,  
And in its beauty was almost divine ;  
He stood in wonder while the incense  
curl'd  
Round the tall columns, and the golden  
shrine ;

He heard the music rolling like a flood  
With thunders based, and eddying echoes  
piled,  
He saw the giant shapes of man and God  
Glorious, in domed sanctuaries aisled ;

He bow'd his head, and all that glory shook  
His steadfast soul—but then he thought  
again  
Of his green valley, and its rippling brook,  
And the meek songs of poor and holy men.

Sweet words of peace and power, like blissful  
    charms,  
The High-priest utter'd from his carven  
    throne,  
And clasp'd his hands, and raised his purple  
    arms,  
As though to teach humility by his own ;

He bow'd his head, and all that golden speech  
Sank, like a lovely melody in his ears ;  
But then he thought how mountain hermits  
    teach  
Love with rough words, but prove it with  
    their tears.

He took his staff, he fled into the light,  
Far from that perilous beauty manifold,  
Lest his enchanted ears, and dazzled sight  
Should scorn the Presences they loved of old :

Beyond the City walls he fled in haste,  
He left its dust, its tumult, and its sound,  
And soon beheld long vales, and mountains  
    vast,  
Their kingly heads with storm and lightning  
    crown'd ;

He saw the gulfy bosom of the woods  
Surge in the wind ; he saw the rivers wide  
Glittering in silence, and the spanless floods  
Of Ocean purpling on the other side ;

He saw the plumed clouds go by in state,  
 And shapes of mighty stature bodied forth,  
 Of pleading Angel, or of armed Fate,  
 Throned in the air, and gazing on the earth ;

The soft wind stirr'd the grass, and thickets  
 green ;  
 Wild wood-notes stream'd around, rare  
 odour-showers ;  
 Glad springs, and silver rillets lisp'd unseen  
 Under the briary shades, and tangled  
 flowers ;

He saw a shadow swallow up the day  
 Like coming Judgment, and again the sun  
 Flash forth, and turn to gold the glooming  
 gray,  
 Like Mercy that repents ere ill be done :

And then he cried, " Oh ! shall mine eyes  
 forego  
 The glorious temple of the eternal skies  
 For all the frail magnificence below,  
 And words of love for cobwebs of the wise ?

" Better the icy wind, the sunshine dim,  
 Better the thousand storms that shake the  
 free,  
 The torrent thundering to the Sabbath  
 hymn,  
 Or the deep voice of the unchained Sea ! "



## THE TWINS

Two children from the mighty Mother sprung,  
And ancient Time, twin Titans, huge in  
limb,  
The first-born with surpassing might was  
strung,  
The younger had his mother's heart in him :

The one was fierce, and from his nostrils came  
Smoke in his wrath, all writhen was his hair,  
Pride made his eyeballs burn like globes of  
flame ;  
The other was all boon as he was fair.

These earth-born giants strove with one another  
To master all the World ; the elder-born  
Claim'd all things for his birthright, but  
his brother  
Full-arm'd in adamant smiled a godlike  
scorn :

The one before him rolling clouds and  
flame  
Trod with an earthquake step that toppled  
down  
The crested cities, but the other came  
And built with music cities of his own,

And while he lay on piles of smoking walls,  
And slumber'd after his tormented years,  
Sow'd the black furrows of his thunder-  
balls  
With amaranth flowers, and water'd them  
with tears :

And in the pauses of the battle thunder  
Were heard such songs that steely warriors  
sigh'd,  
And wounded men forgot their pain in  
wonder,  
And dying eyes look'd up, and pro-  
phesied :

And when the shout of war, and trumpet-  
sound  
Roused those two brothers to the strife  
again,  
The new-built towers and citadels were  
crown'd  
With godlike shapes that mock'd the  
strength of men :

Thenceforth nor iron hosts with banners flying,  
Nor swords, nor trampling hoofs, nor raging  
fire  
Could kill those flowers that from amidst  
the dying  
Rose full of life, and higher sprang, and  
higher !

## EVENING

HUSH ! it is Even, dark-eyed Even,  
With her low song, and tender sigh,  
Soft-utter'd voice of Earth to Heaven  
Witness'd by one sweet star on high ;  
On wheels of rayless flame she passeth by,  
And Peace sits by her clasp'd unto her  
heart ;  
Hatred, relent, and, Care, forget thy  
smart,  
And, Anger, droop thine eye.

Dusky Memories throng her way,  
Bright Fancies from the shadows peep,  
And Hopes that panted in the day  
Sadly hide their eyes and weep ;  
Lorn Griefs look up into the balmy sky,  
Plumed Love upon the soundless air comes  
out,  
And Wit he bears his wavering lamp  
about,  
Despair seeks where to die.

Fly with her yon howling cave  
Loud with riot, red with flame,  
Where haggard Passions whirl and rave  
And Phrenzy links her arms with Shame ;  
Revenge uncoils the serpents round him  
curl'd,  
And Murder steals abroad with perilous  
hand,  
And Treason whispers grim, and lights his  
brand  
To fire a slumbering world.

Fly with her the golden doors,  
Through whose valves thrown open wide  
The trumpet-streaming Revel pours,  
And Folly haunts the ears of Pride ;  
And Nature, like the King at Babylon,  
Dazzled with glories, with enchantments  
bound,  
Hears not the momentarily increasing sound  
Of Judgment rolling on.

Rather let us stroll with her  
By river-slopes, and orchards green,  
Where soft and fragrant thickets stir,  
And the last daylights gush between ;  
Or, when the tides are sunken to their bed,  
Wave her godspeed upon the silent sands,  
As she sails far, far off to rosy lands,  
And night is queen instead.

Rather, while all the air is mute,  
And flowers breathe rare from closing bells,  
Let us listen to her lute,  
And hear her sing divine farewells,  
While dying echoes fall upon our ears,  
For ever dying thro' the misty hills,  
And mix with murmurs of the mountain  
rills,  
And twilight drops her tears.

Rather with her seek the chamber,  
That fond Hesper, twinkling thro'  
The vines that o'er the lattice clamber,  
Every moment peeps into ;  
And some kind mother softly steals above  
From friend, and lover, to her sleeping  
boy,  
And on his cheek all flush'd with dreams  
of joy  
She sets her seal of love.

Rather with her seek the cell  
Where the poet, far apart,  
To two or three he loveth well  
Works the wonders of his art ;  
And from his colour'd lamp, and golden  
lyre  
Peoples the Past with voices and with light  
And scrolls Futurity's unfathom'd night  
With symbols, and with fire.

And when the stars are o'er us burning,  
And the Moon is dawning slow,  
And the nightingale is mourning,  
From his porch we'll softly go ;  
And memories of his music shall descend  
With the pure spirits of the sunless hours,  
Sink through our hearts, like dew into the  
flowers,  
And haunt us without end.

Blessed art thou, O dark-eyed Even,  
Thou, and thy tender handmaids true,  
Send us thy mercies down from heaven  
Daily with the falling dew ;  
Dusk flowers to heal the bleeding brows of  
Sorrow  
From thy soft chaplets fail not to untwine,  
And pour into our tortured hearts, like  
wine,  
Sweet dreams until to-morrow.

## A CLOUD

BRIGHT cloud, that springest from the laugh-  
ing East,  
And on swift wings art come before the  
sun,  
Thou infant, that art panting to outrun  
The God of day; upon thy mother's  
breast  
Wilt thou fall back, like an o'er-eager boy,  
And die ere sunrise in the hope of joy?

Or wilt thou climb the golden steep of day  
Into the zenith, like a Conqueror, borne  
Upon the wheels of the ascending morn,  
And gather power and glory by the way,  
But, like a steed ere yet the goal be past,  
Faint before noon with overmuch of haste?

Or wilt thou bask in the blue air of June,  
Till that sweet-fashion'd shape of thine, in  
seeming  
A King, a throned God, or Angel dream-  
ing,



Melt in the splendour of the summer-  
noon,  
Like drowsy warrior steep'd in sudden  
bliss  
After sharp toil, and fiery victories ?

Or will the afternoon beset thee round  
With thunders, and with lightnings, till thy  
form  
Be mingled with the phantoms of the  
storm,  
Thy lovely hues in black confusion  
drown'd,  
Like a proud Spirit from the highth of  
fame  
Hurl'd down in guilt, in sorrow, and in  
shame ?

Or wilt thou wrap thy youth with every fold  
Of majesty, until thou fill'st half Heaven,  
Towering above the World in purple and  
gold,  
King of the West upon the peaks of Even,  
A blessed Monarch, gracious and sublime,  
Throned on the hearts of men, and top of  
Time ?

## FROM "THE GOLDEN CITY"

Two aged men, that had been foes for life,  
Met by a grave and wept—and in those tears  
They wash'd away the memory of their  
strife ;  
Then wept again the loss of all those years.

Two youths discoursing amid tears and laughter  
Pour'd out their trustful hearts unto each  
other ;  
They never met before, and never after,  
Yet each remember'd he had found a brother.

A boy and girl amid the dawning light  
Glanced at each other at a palace door ;  
That look was hope by day, and dreams by  
night,  
And yet they never saw each other more.

Should gentle spirits born for one another  
Meet only in sad death, the end of all ?  
Should hearts, that spring, like rivers, near  
each other,  
As far apart into the Ocean fall ?

Should heavenly Beauty be a snare to stay  
Free Love, and, ere she hear his tongue  
complain,  
Forsake him, as a lily turns away  
From the air that cannot turn to it again ?

Ah ! hapless Zephyr, thou canst never part  
From the rare odour of the breathing bloom.  
Ah ! flower, thou canst not tell how fair  
thou art,  
Or see thyself, or quaff thine own perfume.

Ah ! Lover unbeloved, or loving not  
The doomed heart that only turns to thee,  
In this wild world how cureless is thy lot.  
Who shall unwind the old perplexity ?

FROM  
"SONGS OF AN OLD MAN"

THE day is blithe, and bright, and fair,  
The loving light is brooding soft  
Over the earth, and many and oft  
The champaign odours borne aloft  
Come down upon me with wild wings,  
And the melodious Summer sings  
Up in the crystal air.

Give me a cup of golden wine  
To drink unto the new-born year,  
It is the nightingale I hear  
Down in the lemon thicket near ;  
And I will sing another song,  
Nature, to thee ; while I am strong  
My voice shall mix with thine.

Out of the unburied bones of Time  
Kind nature's holy beauty springs ;  
To mouldering wall, and turret clings,  
And into chambers of dead kings  
Peeps the young green ; the dewy rose,  
And many a bell that early blows,  
Laugh, as they sunward climb.

The morning light burns through the vines  
 Prankt out again in young green leaves ;  
 The merry wind of morning cleaves  
 The tufted vales, and with them weaves  
 Rare magic—the vine-dresser's song  
 Through the green walks is borne along,  
 As he comes down the lines.

From meadow, vale, and breezy knoll  
 Is many a voice of music flowing,  
 The earth to thoughts beyond our knowing  
 Gives utterance, and is inly glowing  
 With vital pleasure ; thou shalt drink  
 Youth's cup, though at Oblivion's brink  
 A moment, O my soul !

Sometimes a piled summer-cloud  
 Sweeps upward, from it breathing out  
 A breezy gust, that swings about  
 The plumed bowers, and makes a rout  
 Of blossoms white in orchards green ;  
 The poplars o'er the river lean,  
 The blackbird chants aloud.

Under yon fountain's rushing stream  
 Two damsels fill their homely urns,  
 And one unto the other turns,  
 With laughing eye that inly burns ;  
 And like a clarion, silver-clear,  
 She sings of love, and the new year,  
 Her midday golden dream.

And as they stand, and sing together,  
 A dark-eyed boy peeps o'er the wall,  
 And with a low and timorous call  
 Names her unheard—then he lets fall  
 Pebbles into her waterpot,  
 And straight the ditty is forgot,  
 And laughter fills the weather.

On this worn seat of carven stone  
 Where generations past away  
 Have sign'd themselves, this happy day  
 I'll hear what the young finches say  
 Amid the leaves, and o'er the dale  
 Look forth, until the daybeams fail,  
 And breathe the lawns new-mown.

The pulse that beats within me now  
 Throws up a merry wave again ;  
 I hear the voices of strong men,  
 And chant of children—glad as when  
 I was a child, and these white hairs  
 Were dark, as now the raven cares  
 That watch upon my brow.

Give me a cup of golden wine  
 To drink unto the new-born year,  
 It is the nightingale I hear  
 Down in the lemon thicket near ;  
 And I will sing another song,  
 Nature, to thee ; while I am strong  
 My voice shall mix with thine !

## A SUMMER TEMPEST

DARK frowns were cast—ill words were  
spoken—

She wept, as though her heart were broken ;

But when I saw her bitter tears

I thought of all our pleasant years ;

I sigh'd "Ah ! Death were better than  
that sight—

To die with love unbruised, than live  
with sorrow ;

This sunless day shall never have its  
morrow,"

I cried, "if sever'd hearts can reunite."

The storm shriek'd wildly thro' the bowers,

And dash'd to earth the summer flowers ;

The rain it fell from morn till even,

I mourn'd like Spirits cast from Heaven ;

The roses shone against the sombre air

Like the drear torches at a funeral

That glare beside the overhanging pall ;

The wind swept by lamenting like Despair !

I wiped the tears from her sad eyes,  
 I hush'd her lamentable sighs,  
 I calm'd the pulses of her heart,  
 I cried, " No, no, we shall not part !  
 This dark-wing'd hour of passion in its flight  
 Shall open Heaven again, and Love shall rest  
 In peace, and, like the glory in the west,  
 Shall kiss the parting clouds with blessed  
 light !

" Ah ! fatal ill, to live in strife  
 With one I love beyond my life ;  
 Should clouds of contumely pass  
 'Twixt hearts that should be as a glass  
 Each unto each ? 'Tis not so wild and drear  
 When whirlwinds dim the sun, and  
 thunders fly  
 Between the blue sea and the summer sky,  
 As when the faith of Love is turn'd to fear !

" Open not the ark of Peace—  
 Look not forth on stormy seas—  
 Lest Love's swift wings should flee away,  
 And come no more for many a day ;  
 Tempt not again the olive-bearing dove  
 That once hath brought ye the fair branch  
 from far,  
 Lest he should fly where safer coverts are,  
 From thriftless hearts that have abandon'd  
 Love.



“Tender flowerets may outlive  
The frosty nights of spring, and thrive ;  
When the shrilling east winds cease,  
The orchard blossoms bear increase ;  
But lovers' hearts may not abide the breath  
Of angry Scorn—Oh ! that untimely wind  
Sheds their fair youth, and leaves no hope  
behind,  
Save dark Oblivion, and the peace of  
Death ! ”

Heart to heart again was laid,  
I was not sad, nor she afraid ;  
I kiss'd her lips, I kiss'd her brow,  
She murmur'd, “I am happy now.”  
The winds were slumbering on the breast  
of even,  
Fainter and fainter grew the wasting rills,  
Like youthful tears that weep away their  
ills,  
And one sweet star look'd down, like  
Love, from Heaven.

## RIVER OF LIFE

RIVER of Life, oh ! if thy waters were  
As golden bright as from afar they seem  
As thick with blessed islands, and as fair  
As hope beholds them anchor'd in sweet dream ;  
If they were paved with gems of all delights  
As lovers see them ; I would sail with thee  
Onward, for ever onward, day and night  
And breathe in summer till I reach'd the sea.

Oh ! I would lift my sail at break of day  
And launching forward with a shout and  
    song  
Thro' shade of leaves and blossoms cleave  
    my way,  
And feast my heart with music all day long ;  
And when the purple and the gold of even  
Flush'd the gray currents I would drop  
    asleep  
Watching with rapturous eyes the hues of  
    Heaven  
And their unnumber'd shadows in the deep.

But thy still places into whirlpools spin ;  
Thy free fair currents glittering in the sun  
Change into shallows full of rocks within,  
Or stilly into fatal cataracts run ;  
Thy shores lead into howling wildernesses  
Thro' walks of rose, thy overshadowing bowers  
Hide perilous caverns where the serpent hisses,  
And dragons slumber underneath the flowers.

River of Life, lo ! I have furl'd my sail  
Under the twilight of these ancient trees,  
I listen to the water's sleepless wail,  
I fill mine ears with sighs that never cease,  
If armed hearts come stronger out of Ill  
The dust of conflict fills their eyes and ears ;  
Mine unaccustom'd heart will tremble still  
With the old mirth and with the early tears.

## LAST DAY OF SUMMER

Low thunder mutter'd into Summer's ear,  
"Put by thy mantle and thy coronal  
Hush thy loud songs, and mask thy merry  
cheer ;  
To-day is ended thy proud festival ;  
I see a lordlier Presence thro' the shade,  
His eye illumined with a deeper glow,  
His voice more tender, and his step more  
staid ;  
Give place, and bid the Stranger welcome  
Thou !"

There was a sudden silence—no leaf stirr'd—  
She look'd adown the sylvan ways, and lo !  
Far thro' the twilight of the woods she heard  
Faint songs, and saw the regal purple flow ;  
A crowned head was there ; the hunter's  
spear  
Flash'd round him, hounds gave tongue,  
swart Fauns did reel  
Under huge horns of fruit, and she could hear  
The lusty children shouting at his heel.

Queen of the World she saw that sight with  
sighs ;

She shed some tears by reason of her fall ;  
Then dried them fiercely, and with flashing  
eyes

Bade the dark storm come down and be  
her pall.

A ladder leaning 'twixt the earth and skies  
Of golden steps hung o'er the cloudy wall  
Of the wild West ; she scaled that stair  
of fire,

And laid herself full-robed upon her pyre !

## THE GARLANDS OF MEMORY

WHEN Memory in the gloom of cypress  
bowers

Unwove her garlands, she laid down with  
sighs

Mournfully, one by one, the wither'd  
flowers

That were at morn the light of her sad eyes.

The wild buds she had gather'd had drunk  
up

Their matin dew, and died : gray dust of  
Death

Lay desolate in the lily's silver cup,

The red rose breathed not its voluptuous  
breath :

She said, " The light is dying,

'Tis nigh the end of Day,

Cease, heart, oh ! cease thy sighing,

We must away, away ! "

Their drooping graces, and their dusky hues,

Their faint sweets telling of the morning  
time

Pleaded to her so well, she could not  
 choose  
 But love them faded better than their  
 prime ;  
 She held them up before her aching sight,  
 She breathed fond sighs to spread them  
 out again ;  
 She laid their dim soft leaves across the  
 light,  
 And gave them tender tears, like autumn  
 rain :

She sang, " The sun is leaving  
 The blessed summer-day,  
 Cease, heart, ah ! cease thy grieving  
 We must away, away ! "

Then blamed she the swift sun, whose eager  
 touch  
 Had stolen all their beauty's early  
 treasure—  
 The wind, that had been wanton overmuch,  
 And drawn their life forth with excess of  
 pleasure ;  
 Her tears could not awake their bloom  
 again,  
 In vain against her mournful heart they lay ;  
 Her tenderest tears could wash away no  
 stain,  
 Her beating heart but shed their leaves  
 away :

She mourn'd, "The sun is setting,  
 It is the end of day,  
 Cease, heart, ah! cease regretting,  
 We must away, away!"

At last she found some leaves of eglatere,  
 Whose circling spray had bound those  
 flowers in one;  
 She said, "I will not weep, while thou art  
 here,  
 Whose odour and fresh leaf outlives the  
 sun;  
 Green wert thou in the early morning  
 shine,  
 Green art thou still at even—a holy  
 wreath  
 Of pale, sweet flowers for me thou still  
 may'st twine,  
 When I go forth to be the bride of Death!"

She sigh'd, "The sun is set,  
 It is no longer day;  
 Oh! heart, could'st thou forget!—  
 But, come, away, away!"



## MOONLIGHT

O HEAVEN ! who shall fitly say  
How lovely is a summer's night,  
When like a phantom of the day  
It comes, a phantom crown'd with light,  
A gracious image, mild and sweet,  
A friend whose heart hath ceased to beat :

A silent presence, fair and kind,  
As like unto the noon, whose soul  
Was sunlight and whose breath the wind  
Whereon the blissful odours roll,  
As the pure spirit of a child  
To its blue eyes, and laughters wild,

That opens those delighted eyes,  
And sinless heart unto the day,  
Then leaves the World, its tears and sighs,  
And bears unwither'd bliss away,  
That parts to-day, but with the morrow  
Flies back to soothe its mother's sorrow.

Its Angel brow is starry-bright,  
Its step is hush'd, its voice unheard,  
It smiles upon her woful plight,  
But speaks not to her one sweet word :  
In all, but that, the very same  
As when it breathed and spoke her name.

She sees him standing there—she fears  
To speak—to breathe—lest he should  
part  
For evermore—she holds her tears,  
She hears the pulses of her heart—  
And I will whisper, nor alarm  
Day's ghost with sighs, or break the  
charm.

Oh ! I could stand an hour, and dream  
That Hope, and Fear, and Good, and Ill  
Were pulseless, as the flowers that gleam  
Dimly beneath the moonlight still,  
And that the morn shall rise again  
No more on me the last of men,

And that the World shall reawake  
No more, nor any tears be shed,  
Nor ill words cause a heart to ache,  
But there be Peace, deep Peace instead,  
For ever—solemn as the sky,  
And boundless as Infinity !

Oh! sure it is a thousand years  
Since daylight shone upon the earth,  
And I the only thing that bears  
A life—great nature hath breathed forth  
Her being on the sunset wind,  
And left her awful Soul behind!

## A PROPHECY

ON Sinai's steep I saw the morning cloud  
Shatter'd with light roll off on either hand,  
And on the topmost peak an Angel stand  
That lifted up his arms and cried aloud  
And shook the sea and land.

“The Night is ended and the Morning nears,  
Awake, look up, I hear the gathering sound  
Of coming cycles, like an Ocean round,  
I see the glory of a thousand years  
Lightening from bound to bound.

Woe, woe, the Earth is faint, its heart is old  
And none look upward. Where is one who  
saith

Forgive my sins by reason of my faith?  
Where is one truthful Bard, one Prophet bold,  
One heart that listeneth?

One holy soul that prayeth night and morn,  
One kindly hermit or one lowly sage,  
One adamant warrior who can wage  
A steadfast war without the arms of scorn  
Against a scornful age.

Where is the promise of the world's great  
youth,  
The sunrise of the soul, when God's own eye  
Scatter'd the darkness of Futurity,  
And Kings bow'd down and caught the light  
of Truth  
Directly from on high.

The hour is come again ; the world-wide  
voice  
Of God shall cry into the ears of Time,  
Scorners shall seek and Saints shall welcome  
Him,  
And know the Ancient Presence and rejoice  
As in the days of prime.

And they that dwell apart shall know each  
other,  
And they that hymn their solemn songs  
alone  
Shall hear far voices mingling with their  
own,  
And understand the utterance of a brother  
In every tongue and tone.

And Truth like the great sun at eve shall  
stream  
Alike on frozen peak or lowly lea,  
Rivers that shall with endless plenty teem,  
And pastures lovelier than the land of Dream,  
And glory like a Sea.

And countless tongues upon one note of  
praise  
Shall hang, until like thunder in the hills  
Redoubled and redoubled it fulfils  
The Earth and Heaven and everlasting day,  
And drowns the noise of Ills.

That note shall soar from every living heart,  
That endless note shall never die away.  
“God, only God, to-day as yesterday,  
Thou wert from everlasting, and thou art  
For ever and for aye !”

## TO A SUMMER FLY

THOU, that livest in the sun,  
That, like the lilies, hast not spun  
Or toiled since thy life begun ;  
Thou, that sorrow canst not see,  
That fliest all shadows, swift and free,  
How can Death o'ershadow thee ?

If I were a Fairy fine,  
I would make a day of mine  
Into a life as long as thine,  
Tearless wanderer of the sky,  
That art born, dost live and die,  
Ere the bright days are gone by.

Thro' the livelong sunny day  
Singing with thy lovers gay  
To merry thoughts a merry lay,  
Tiny thing, what sayest thou,  
As thou goest above me now,  
Shedding down upon my brow

The diamond dust that sprinks thy wings?  
Is it of the wondrous things  
That the plumed Summer brings  
Out of her treasures? anthers fair  
Wherein the fallen shower-drops are  
As blest elixirs rich and rare?

I would feel the joy thou feelest,  
As round the garden plots thou wheelest,  
And drunk with song and light thou  
reelest,  
And the noon is deep and fair,  
And not a sound of life is there  
But thy low song that thrills the air.

Hast thou learnt those melodies  
Heard when Day comes up the skies  
And the subtle atomies  
Are stirr'd with morn? or hath thy sight  
Mark'd the shuttle of the Night  
Throw its threads across the light?

At thy birth, did that slim Fay  
That drew thy form at break of day  
Out of the rose wherein it lay,  
Swathe thee in the rainbow hues  
Wherewith the level sunrise strews  
That moment all the meadow dews?



Whither dost thou turn thy sails  
Cross'd with tiny spars and brails  
Made for breath of magic gales?  
What is thy freight? an Infant's soul,  
Or a Maiden's that hath stole  
Away from mortal days of dole?

When silent shadows on thee fall,  
And a rose leaf is thy pall,  
Do little ghosts unto thee call?  
Doth thy joy, a deathless thing,  
For ever haunt the days of Spring,  
Or cease, when thou hast ceased to sing?

Thou art a charmed bark that flees  
Swiftly with songs thro' soundless seas,  
With blossom odours for a breeze,  
Launching from a green, green shore  
The tiniest bark that ever bore  
Silken sail and silver oar.

Launching on the golden tide  
Of morning, bound for realms untried,  
Thou pliest along the sunbeam wide,  
Bound for some flowery cape afar,  
Or sunflower islet in mid air,  
A dazzling dewdrop for thy star.

O wondrous Life, O winged spark,  
Between thy plumes I would embark  
Soon as the daybeam drives the dark.

If I were a Fairy free  
I would search the ethereal sea,  
And sail far off with songs like thee.

If I were a Fairy fine,  
I would make a day of mine  
Into a life as long as thine,  
Tearless wanderer of the sky,  
That art born, dost live, and die,  
Ere the Summer days go by.

## THE SEA

COME sit awhile beneath these nodding trees  
And let us hear the waters moan and sing  
And see the glittering haughty surges fling  
Their snowcrests down upon the floor o' the  
    seas.

This holy tranquil sweet monotony,  
This ancient music tender and divine  
Is thine own hymn, deep-voiced Liberty,  
These airs that crisp the blue are breath of  
    thine.

But Fancy's heart now beats not as of old,  
Her tongue is dusty and her lips are dry,  
And all the busy-minded pass her by  
Or greet her with faint welcome sad and  
    cold.

The ancient cities of the sunbright deeps  
Are fallen and the temples by the Sea ;  
She hears strange thunders o'er the waters  
    flee,

And by the broken altars sits and weeps.

Yet still I yearn to hear from out the gloom  
Of some high cavern shadowing o'er the bay,  
Where a wild echo sobbeth night and day  
And 'mid sharp rocks the crystal waters boom,  
Sound of sea-mirth into the sunlight stream,  
And songs and laughter thrill the summer air,  
And glimpse the Gods in festal robes, and  
dream  
That they are merry with the Nereids there.

Still do I yearn to see Poseidon urge  
His wheels along the waves and hear the snort  
Of his horn'd horses panting into port  
Over the neck of some great frowning surge.  
Still do I yearn with mortal ears to hear  
The noonday Triton sound his rosy shell  
'Mid these cool rocks, and see the dolphins  
rear  
Their pearly flanks, enchanted by the spell.

Behind this cape of breezy bowers we'll stand,  
If haply we may hear the charming song  
Of lorn Arion as he glides along  
Between the mossy headlands, harp in hand,  
Wondering with wild blue eyes and hair  
astray—  
Or watch the laughing Galatea whirl  
Past us into the green and purple bay  
Tilted in sea-green scarf and ribbed pearl.

See'st thou yon grot?—'tis paved with golden  
grain—

There the blue waters resting from their play  
Sleep through the August noon, and day by  
day

A white-arm'd Sea-nymph with her fair-hair'd  
train

Cleaves the calm flood serene as mountain  
springs

With her white arms, and soon a sparry cave  
Trembles with all its tears the while she sings  
Looking toward the windless azure wave.

There in clear gloom she muses far away  
From her bright-eyed companions, there she  
weaves

A coronal of gems and wild sea-leaves,  
A fairy wreath against her bridal day,  
Singing and looking seaward with soft eyes,  
That her young God may see her from the  
water

And in the light of rainbows may arise  
And clasp unto his heart the Ocean daughter.

I heard that song far down along the sea,  
Its silver sweetness on the breezes flew  
Like wafted odours or clear drops of dew  
Freshening the Morn, and rose above the roar  
Of tumbling waves and murmuring ripples  
clear,

And when it ceased, I could have dived far  
under

The green and purple deeps again to hear  
That charming song and see that Ocean  
wonder.

Oh ! we have found a fair and quiet haven.  
Here may we linger, shelter'd from the gales,  
Musing strange chances and sad fitful tales,  
While far without the angry deep is raving ;  
And Memory, like a Nymph who strings  
together

Stray pearls in sandy nooks and wild sea caves,  
Shall chant to us old rhymes of wind and  
weather,

Perils and wrecks and marvels of the waves.

## THE BLACKBIRD

How sweet the harmonies of afternoon—  
The blackbird sings along the sunny breeze  
His ancient song of leaves, and Summer  
boon ;  
Rich breath of hayfields streams thro' whis-  
pering trees ;  
And birds of morning trim their bustling  
wings,  
And listen fondly—while the blackbird  
sings.

How soft the lovelight of the west reposes  
On this green valley's cheery solitude,  
On the trim cottage with its screen of roses,  
On the gray belfry with its ivy-hood,  
And murmuring mill-race, and the wheel  
that flings  
Its bubbling freshness—while the blackbird  
sings.

The very dial on the village church  
Seems as 'twere dreaming in a dozy rest ;

The scribbled benches underneath the porch  
Bask in the kindly welcome of the west ;  
But the broad casements of the old Three  
Kings  
Blaze like a furnace—while the blackbird  
sings.

And there beneath the immemorial elm  
Three rosy revellers round a table sit,  
And thro' gray clouds give laws unto the  
realm,  
Curse good and great, but worship their  
own wit,  
And roar of fights, and fairs, and junketings,  
Corn, colts, and curs—the while the black-  
bird sings.

Before her home, in her accustom'd seat,  
The tidy Grandam spins beneath the shade  
Of the old honeysuckle, at her feet  
The dreaming pug, and purring tabby laid ;  
To her low chair a little maiden clings,  
And spells in silence—while the blackbird  
sings.

Sometimes the shadow of a lazy cloud  
Breathes o'er the hamlet with its gardens  
green,  
While the far fields with sunlight overflow'd  
Like golden shores of Fairyland are seen ;



Again, the sunshine on the shadow springs,  
And fires the thicket where the blackbird  
sings.

The woods, the lawn, the peaked Manorhouse,  
With its peach-cover'd walls, and rookery  
loud,  
The trim, quaint garden alleys, screen'd  
with boughs,  
The lion-headed gates, so grim and proud,  
The mossy fountain with its murmurings,  
Lie in warm sunshine—while the blackbird  
sings.

The smoke-wreaths from the chimneys curl  
up higher,  
And dizzy things of Eve begin to float  
Upon the light, the breeze begins to tire  
Halfway to sunset, with a drowsy note  
The ancient clock from out the valley  
swings ;  
The Grandam nods—and still the blackbird  
sings.

Far shouts and laughter from the farmstead  
rise,  
Where the great stack is piling in the  
sun ;  
Thro' narrow gates o'erladen waggons reel,  
And barking curs into the tumult run ;

While the inconstant wind bears off, and  
brings  
The merry tempest—and the blackbird  
sings.

On the high wold the last look of the sun  
Burns, like a beacon, over dale and stream;  
The shouts have ceased—the laughter and  
the fun;  
The Grandam sleeps, and peaceful be her  
dream;  
Only a hammer on an anvil rings—  
The day is dying—still the blackbird sings.

Now the good Vicar passes from his gate  
Serene, with long white hair—and in his eye  
Burns the clear spirit that hath conquer'd  
Fate,  
And felt the wings of immortality;  
His heart is throng'd with great imaginings,  
And tender mercies—while the blackbird  
sings.

Down by the brook he bends his steps, and  
through  
A lowly wicket—and at last he stands  
Awful beside the bed of one who grew  
From boyhood with him—who with lifted  
hands,  
And eyes, seems listening to far welcomings,  
And sweeter music than the blackbird sings.

Two golden stars, like tokens from the Blest,  
Strike on his dim orbs from the setting  
sun ;

His sinking hands seem pointing to the  
west ;

He smiles as though he said, "Thy will be  
done."

His eyes they see not those illuminings—  
His ears they hear not what the blackbird  
sings.

## THE MOUNTAINS

UPON the icy mountain-top alone  
I only hear the beatings of my heart,  
Sunburst, and shower, and shadow, earth-  
ward thrown,  
Like mortal fortunes for a moment shown,  
Go by me, and depart :

There is no voice to talk with me so high,  
The secret spirit of the desert place  
Answers not to me, and beneath me lie  
The World, and all its wonders—Death  
and I  
Are standing face to face !

And from the torrents, and the caves ascend  
Temple of cloud, dim king, and sunlit God,  
Angels, with aspects changing without end ;  
Visions of power and glory earthward bend,  
And sceptred Giants nod !

A sunbeam cleaves the misty gulf, and lo !  
As thro' great gates unfolding in the sky,  
Valleys, and plains, and rivers past me flow,  
And silent cities glittering from below  
Like phantoms, hover by !

So from the far-off mount of Poesy  
The World's great shows like the hush'd  
    champaign seem ;  
The Actual, Insubstantiality ;  
Real, what is shaped in Fancy's eager eye ;  
Fear, love, a hope, a dream !

Glorious is he, who on that sovranly  
Makes a far beacon of his soul sublime ;  
Blessed is he, who from the illumined sky  
Can reach the murmurs of Humanity,  
And hear the voice of Time.

The unborn Future lightens on his brow,  
As on the topmost cliffs the dawning East ;  
Memories, like glory pour'd back from  
    the West,  
Live in his heart, and in his music glow,  
When summer-days have ceased.

In his own land his ever-wakeful eye  
Stands sentinel, like an unsetting star,  
The glory of his Immortality  
Like the great peaks that glitter in the sky,  
Burns, and is shown afar !

And when vast cycles, rolling wars and woes,  
Have laid in darkness lesser lights between,  
Far as the utmost age, o'er friends and foes,  
His mighty spectre, like the eternal snows,  
Shall soar up, and be seen !

## TO THE CICALA

BLITHEST Spirit of the Earth,  
Happy as incarnate Mirth,  
Minion, whom the Fairies feed,  
Who dost not toil, and canst not need  
(Thine odorous ark a forest bough) ;  
While Summer laughs as fair as now  
I will not feast, or drink of wine,  
But live with thee, and joys like thine !

Oh ! who may be as blithe and gay  
As thou, that singest night and day,  
Setting the light and shadows green  
Aflutter with thy pulses keen,  
And every viny glen and vale  
Athrilling with thy long, long tale,  
And river-bank and starlit shore  
With thy triumphs flooding o'er !

When the wild Bee is at rest—  
When the Nightingale hath ceased—  
Still I hear thee, reveller, still,  
Over heath and over hill ;

Thou singest thro' the fire of noon—  
Thou singest till the day be done—  
Thou singest to the rising moon—  
Thou singest up the unrisen sun.

Into the forest I will flee,  
And be alone with Mirth and thee,  
And wash the dust from Fancy's wings  
With tears of Heaven, and virgin springs;  
Thou shalt lead me o'er the tops  
Of thymy hills, down orchard slopes,  
Past sunlit dell, and moonlit river,  
Thou shalt lead me on for ever !

Oft, at the first still flush of morn,  
The soft tones of some charmed horn  
I shall hear, like sounds in sleep,  
Waft o'er the greenwood fresh and deep  
From magic hold, where Giants thrall  
Beauty in some airy hall,  
And a plumed lover waits  
To burst the spell before the gates.

When the sun is hot and high,  
I will rest where low winds sigh,  
And dark leaves twine, and rillets creep ;  
Then send me, with thy whir, asleep ;  
And softly on some prison'd beam  
Shall quiver down a noontday dream,  
Wherein thy ceaseless note shall tingle,  
And the sweet-toned waters mingle.



A dream of Faery, where a million  
Of winged Elves a rare pavilion  
Build for Love amid the green,  
The fairest summer-house e'er seen ;  
While some their silver trowels ring,  
Others opal blocks shall bring,  
And with quaint laugh, and music fine,  
Pile them in the sunny shine.

Monarch, thy great heart is more  
Than treasures, if thou be poor ;  
Tho' few the days that to thee fall,  
They are long, and summer's all ;  
Minstrel, tho' thy life be brief,  
Thou art happier than the chief  
Of mortal Poets, for thy song  
Is fed with rapture all day long !

Lord of Summer, Forest-King,  
Of the bright drops the breezes fling  
Down upon the mossy lawn  
In the dim sweet hours of dawn,  
Clear as daylight, pure as Heaven,  
Drops which the midsummer even  
Weeps into pale cups silently,  
I will take, and drink to thee !

Just as I raise it to my lip,  
Plumed Oberon shall dip  
His sceptre in, and Puck shall dive,  
And I will swallow him alive ;

And on the vapour of that dew  
He shall rise, and wander thro'  
My brain, and make a sudden light,  
Like the first beam that scatters night.

Then shall I hear what songs they sing  
Under the fresh leaves in the spring ;  
And see what moonlit feasts they hold  
Under a lily's roof of gold ;  
And, when the midnight mists upcurl,  
Watch how they whisk, and how they whirl,  
And dance, and flash from earth to air !  
Bright and sudden as a star !

They shall dance, and thou shalt sing ;  
But they shall slumber, Court, and King,  
They shall faint, ere thou be spent,  
And each shall seek his dewbell tent,  
And Titania's self shall tire  
And sleep beneath a wild rose briar,  
Ere thou be sad, ere thou be still,  
Piper of the thymy hill.

Thee, in thy fresh and leafy haunt,  
Nor Wealth can bribe, nor Penury daunt,  
Nor Glory puff, nor Envy tear,  
Thy drink the dew, thy food the air,  
Oh ! could I share in thy delight,  
And dream in music day and night,  
Methinks I would be ev'n as thou,  
And sing beneath a forest bough !

Nor Pain, nor Evil canst thou see,  
Thou fear'st not Death, though it must be,  
Therefore no Sorrow lights on thee,  
Or mingles with thy melody,  
From want thy jocund heart is free,  
Thou livest in triumphant glee,  
Thou diest, shouting jubilee!  
A God—save Immortality!

## COMING TEMPEST

THE mountains throw their shadows on the  
deep

Impenetrable, and calm ; the blood-red moon  
Looks thro' barr'd clouds where growing  
thunders sleep

Like a stray'd ghost that shall be summon'd  
soon ;

The soul grows awful as the land and sea,  
And warlike phantoms of heroic kings  
Move thro' the dark, or in the moonlight  
stand

With trembling crests, and iron glimmerings.

Such seems the night when in great Babylon  
The mystic hand came forth upon the wall ;  
Such seems the night when Rome's foredoomed  
town

Heard not the swift step of the cruel Gaul ;  
Such seems the night when, with the torrent  
Hell

On that soft City by Parthenope  
All 'mid her revels fiery Judgment fell  
And swallow'd Gods and Men eternally.

Such seems the night proud Iliion fell to  
shame—

When the pale fisher from the shores afar  
Beheld her dark towers tumble in the flame,  
Heard fatal trumpets wail, and shouts of war  
Swung on the cloudy twilight, like huge  
knells—

The world-wide throbs of Empire overthrown  
That hush'd the ripples lispig o'er the shells,  
With rush of guardian wings for ever flown.

## FROM "THE CITY"

ALAS! that Man, who is not all of clay,  
Should feed the living Lamp, ordain'd to  
shine

Upon the works and light the words divine,  
With such coarse oil it needs must die away ;  
Till in the gathering gloom, where Truth  
should be,

Strange phantoms pass, and the despairing  
heart

Careless of Being, or Mortality,  
Cries "Where art THOU? we see not where  
thou art."

Doubt that thou livest, rather than that Will  
Without whose hest thou couldst not raise  
thy hand ;

Or shape a single leaf, a grain of sand,  
Or make thy heart to beat when it is still ;  
Who doubts but for a moment, till he lay  
That doubt upon the Eternal Wings, is lost ;  
Pray, doubter ; morn, and noon, and even,  
pray,

Else art thou fallen lower than the dust !

Oh! for what end should aught, or God, or  
Man  
Wake, breathe, and live, save this, and this  
alone—  
To turn in living unto Him, the One  
That Is, the One that Wills, the One that  
Can?  
Forget not!—or the self-same Hand that  
wrought  
Atoms or Systems, Spirits, Gods, or Men,  
Will breathe upon the Whole, and make it  
Nought,  
And from that Nought to-morrow build  
again!

Nor pause upon the appointed path, nor fail;  
As tho' the Earth should sadly fall away  
Into deep Space, until the vital Day  
Wax'd cold as midnight, and, as moonlight,  
pale:  
Nor strive ere Death with Angel wings to fly;  
As tho' the Planet to its Star should run,  
And with the growing light should come the  
cry,  
"We faint, we burn, we fall into the Sun!"

## FROM "THE FOREST"

### (1) MORNING

Look where the forest slopes unto the lake,  
And the brisk winds that curl the Summer  
trees  
Leap to the brink, their morning thirst to  
slake,  
Caught from the sharp rocks and the  
parched leas ;  
The evening waters now begin to sing  
Over the swart sands, and three Oreads tall  
From oak-tree arms a crimson awning swing,  
Whose ruby shadows o'er the mosses fall.

As tho' the blushing turf-plot saw, and knew  
The Virgin Huntress with unzoned limbs !  
For now a lucent shoulder fresh with dew  
Dawns o'er the waters, as she shoreward  
swims,  
Now leans she on the pebbles with her hand,  
And lifts herself amid her long bright hair,  
Now with her Nymphs she shoots across  
the strand  
Peerless in grace and stature, pure and fair.



And now she sits in rosy light and veils  
 Her innocence, and to the silver sound  
 Of falling ripples she begins her tales  
 Of summer pastimes sought with horn and  
 hound ;  
 At every pause young girls with kirtles  
 green  
 Taking their little lyres of gracious mould  
 Sing antique songs, and strike the strings  
 between—  
 Echoes, and shadows of the Age of gold.

Oh ! I could tarry under these green boughs,  
 In these soft shadows, all the Summer long,  
 If only one sweet Nymph with sunny  
 brows  
 Would teach me all her ancient woodland  
 song,  
 Till I had learn'd such pure and simple  
 breath  
 As pour'd into the dusty ears of Kings  
 Would make them thirsty for a wild-rose  
 wreath,  
 Green glens, and thymy slopes, and pure  
 cold rills.

## (2) NOON

In the hot hours when scarce the whir is  
heard  
Of the bird's wing, or murmur of the bee,  
Where the leaf-shadows tremble on the  
sward,  
To the wild forest come away with me ;  
I know a dewy green where you may lie,  
And dream you hear from the embowered  
glades  
Low laughter twinkle, and sweet music sigh  
And faint away among the pillar'd shades.

I know a lake upon whose surface pass  
Trembling soft pictures of the summer  
treen,  
And as we gaze into that magic glass  
The sloping woods with their high walks  
are seen.  
Keep thou thine eye upon the azure water,  
And when its mirror ruffles with the air,  
I'll show thee many a rosy forest-daughter,  
Satyr, and wild-eyed Hamadryad there.

I'll show thee sun-brown Faun with Wood-  
nymph playing,  
Or twining wreaths of eglantine and rose,  
Or on soft moss the tawny musk-grape laying

For Pan, who takes his afternoon repose  
 Upon deep flowers, and virgin green, to  
 slake

His thirsty ardours, when at set of day  
 From his enchanted dreams the God shall  
 wake,

And see the shadows turn'd the other way.

And sometimes Bacchus shall go reeling by  
 Where the deep forest leaves a lawny dell,  
 With flute and twisted wand and sunlit eye  
 Amid the rose-crown'd Mænads, with a  
 swell

Far off of mingled voices musical,  
 And for a moment, in a stream of light,  
 Thou shalt behold the viny festival  
 Sweep by like dream, and glitter out of  
 sight!

If thou shouldst slumber, from a thicket near  
 The grasshopper shall wake thee up with  
 glee,

And hidden rillets bubbling in thine ear  
 Shall float off the soft hours with melody;  
 Thy curls uplifted by the Zephyr sleek  
 Shall make thee dream of some beloved  
 hand

Laid in thy hair, a kiss upon thy cheek,  
 And one dear face the loveliest in the land.

## (3) NIGHT

O Silence, Solitude, and pathless Shade,  
O sacred Forests, under whose dread night  
Morn fears to tread, and Noonday is afraid  
To flash his sword, who haunts ye in the  
light  
Of the pale stars, when, like an awful eye,  
The midnight moon climbs o'er the  
towered brow  
Of frowning crags to watch ye from on  
high,  
And weary winds into their caverns flow ?

What Memories wander here and sigh un-  
heard ?  
What unremember'd Superstitions creep,  
And house with serpent, and with dreary  
bird ?  
What coming Dolours in your blackness  
sleep ?  
What hoary Vengeance whets his rusty  
sword ?  
What unappeased Rancours pine and weep ?  
What dismal mutterings of Remorse and  
Fear  
Come down the stilly air, and reach me  
here ?

What whispers tremble here of untold Sin,  
 Of Murders plotted, fatal Treasons spun?  
 What solemn murmurs float afar within  
 Of Murders unreveal'd, and Treasons  
 done?

What doleful tumults issue to the Earth  
 From the dark mouth of some deep-shaded  
 den,  
 Where nightly Wizards, howling in their  
 mirth,  
 Dance round the piled bones of waylaid  
 men?

What mournful Ghosts pace down your aisles  
 of leaves?

What awful Voices sweep from bound to  
 bound?

What sobbings of a phrenzied heart that  
 grieves,

Mix'd with deep cries of Acheron's cruel  
 hound?

In what thick shadows Demogorgon heaves  
 His cloud-like Majesty from underground,  
 Witching till earthquakes leap, and  
 lightnings run,

And black-wing'd storms blot out the  
 morning sun?

## FROM "THE POET"

### (1) A PRAYER

COME to me, magic Spirits, and deliver  
My heart from memories of immortal Pain,  
In vision let me taste of Hope again ;  
Ah ! will the broken heart of Nature never  
Beat tunefully, or cease to beat for ever ?

Methinks some peaceful Madness under care  
Of tender Sylphs, pure Angels of delight,  
Ready to minister unto my sight  
Visions, and dreams of colours new and rare,  
With sometimes their own countenances  
fair,

Were more than the forlorn felicities  
Of endless Empire, sorrowful and proud,  
More than all dazzling shows, and trumpets  
loud,  
That knock at hearts where Anguish never  
dies,  
And Love is not to drink their hourly sighs.

Set me beside the gates of Paradise,  
That I may watch far triumphs float along,  
And hear the echoes of Cherubic song,  
And breezes sweeping down from Summer  
skies  
Wild gusts of the celestial Harmonies.

And see the flaming sword depart for aye,  
Like earth-born lightning flashing up to  
Heaven,  
And down into the gulfy darkness driven  
Death with his dusk hosts, and his banners  
gray,  
Like torrents from high valleys glad with  
day.

I ask not for the Wisdom of the Wise,  
Or sceptre of the Mighty ; when I weep  
Dry thou my tears, O Fancy, and in sleep  
Uncharm the ancient dread Realities,  
And shower down wonders on my clouded  
eyes.

Better a starry Night than stormy Noon ;  
Better to sleep in peace than wake in  
sorrow ;  
Better to die to-day than mourn to-  
morrow ;  
And what remains, if Joy, the topmost  
boon,  
Be lost in winning all beneath the Moon ?

## (2) A COMPARISON

Into his gorgeous halls the Painter led  
The Poet with his volume in his hand ;  
He said—" All these I have accomplished,  
In form and hue like very Gods they  
stand :  
And Death and Fate I vanquish, if I  
please,  
With shadows, and mine only foe is Time ;  
Can any come in glory like to these  
Out of thy dim and melancholy clime ? "

In twilight sanctuaries there were seen  
Shapes more than Man, the Mighty that  
had been ;  
Wonder and love flow'd round them like a  
psalm,  
Lock'd in eternal strife, or throned in  
calm :  
Giants of marble, Demigods and Kings,  
Whose very names, like overshadowing  
wings,  
Darken the Earth's faint light and little  
span,  
And with their beauty mock their maker  
Man.



The rapturous Musician bade unbind  
The spirit that obey'd him when he will'd,  
And blisses sweet as odour, fleet as wind,  
Pass'd from him, and the solemn dome  
was fill'd ;  
He breathed enchanted breath that o'er the  
sense  
Trembled, like fiery light on crisped  
streams,  
And lull'd the painful soul, and bore it  
hence  
Into a land of moonlight and of dreams.

Evening came down, and darkness closed  
around  
Those shapes, and silence swallow'd up  
that sound ;  
But He his magic volume did unroll  
And show'd the threefold image of his  
soul ;  
He show'd them fix'd therein the fluttering  
thought,  
That Music scatters, into substance brought,  
And god-like moments, which the Painters  
strive  
To bind with fetters, moving and alive !

ON THE DEATH OF HIS  
SISTER EMILY

1887

FAREWELL, dear Sister, thou and I  
Will meet no more beneath the sky :  
But in the high world where thou art  
Mind speaks to Mind and heart to heart—  
Not in faint wavering tones, but heard  
As twin sweet notes that sound accord.  
Thy dwelling in the Angel sphere  
Looks forth on a sublimer whole ;  
There all that thou dost see and hear  
Is in true concord with thy soul—  
A great harp of unnumbered strings  
Answering to one voice that sings—  
Where thousand blisses spring and fade  
Swiftly, as in diviner dream,  
And inward motions are portrayed  
In outward shows that move with them.  
After the midnight and dark river  
No more to be o'erpast for ever,

Behold the lover of thy youth,  
That spirit strong as love and truth,  
Many a long year gone before,  
Awaits thee on the sunny shore.  
In that high world of endless wonder  
Nor space nor time can hold asunder  
Twin souls (as space and time have done)  
Whom kindest instincts orb in one.

## TO THE POET'S MOTHER

WHEN I do think of all thy tenderness,  
Thy tears of gladness all for love of me,  
Thy life as pure as sinful dust may be,  
Thy pity and thy mercy not the less  
For all thy days of anguish and distress,  
The patient spirit of thy humble mind,  
I seek all prayers of blessing I can find  
And feel a hope from my affection growing  
Faithful and strong, that when the tide of time  
With dangers and with fears is overflowing,  
Thou wilt be borne from this inclement clime  
To peace, and set upon a stormless isle  
Fenced by God's hand and lighted by His  
    smile.

## OLD AGE

As when into the garden paths by night  
One bears a lamp, and with its sickly glare  
Scatters the burnished flowers a-dreaming there,  
Palely they show like spectres in his sight,  
Lovely no more, disfurnished of delight,  
Some folded up and drooping o'er the way,  
Their odours spent, their colour changed to

gray,

Some that stood queen-like in the morning light  
Fallen discrowned : so the low-burning loves  
That tremble in the hearts of aged men  
Cast their own light upon the world that moves  
Around them, and receive it back again.  
Old joys seem dead, old faces without joys ;  
Laughter is dead. There is no mirth in boys.

## TO DEATH

I WILL not stay indoors, nor under roof,  
Death, when I see thee come. A man of war  
I will go forth and meet thee from afar.  
But I will not be clad in mail of proof  
Nor listen idly to the armed hoof  
Of a strong horse, my brows I will not case  
In steel. Although I meet thee face to face  
And thou dost frown, I will not stand aloof.  
And if thou shalt subdue me with thy spear,  
Then will I flee into the sanctuary  
Of mine own soul, where dying I shall hear  
That "As I live I shall live." Thou shalt die,  
Great killer though thou art. Not all the  
breath  
Thou takest from the world shall save thee  
death.

## HOPE .

ANGELS of beauty are abroad to-day  
And ministers of life. The winds are sleeping  
And through a thin-wove veil of silver gray  
The sun is like a timid lover peeping,  
Where hope within her garden stands and sings  
And, gazing upwards, hears the skylark  
chiming

Sweet response to her song, and with his wings  
Swift measure to his eager music timing.

Far o'er the woods into the mists of morn,  
Ceasing her song, she turns her straining sight  
And the pale mountains on their fronts forlorn  
Catch her warm smile and laugh with sudden  
light.

Then to her flowers she turns from fields and  
skies

And in their dew-drops sees her own blue eyes.

## THE PROSPECT OF EVIL DAYS

'Tis not a time for triumph and delight,  
For dance and song, for jocund thoughts and  
ease ;

Like cloud on cloud before a stormy night  
Sorrows I see, and doleful deeds increase :  
Destruction, like the Uragan, shall come,  
And change, like mighty winds, whose  
lowering moan

Swells to a shout that makes the thunder  
dumb,

And bloody Anarchs call the earth their own.  
But when this time of terror and despair  
Is past, tho' I be weary and o'erworn,  
Still let me live to breathe the freshened air,  
And hail the glory of that happy morn,  
When the new day shall o'er the mountains  
roll,

And love again pour down his sunny soul !



## TO POESY

'Tis not for golden eloquence I pray,  
A God-like tongue to move a stony heart :  
Full fain am I to dwell with thee apart  
In solitary uplands far away,  
And, thro' the blossoms of a bloomy spray,  
To gaze upon the wonderful, sweet face  
Of Nature in a wild and pathless place :  
And if it were that I should once array,  
In words of magic woven curiously,  
All the deep gladness of a summer morn,  
Or rays of evening that light up the lea  
On dewy days of spring, or shadows borne  
Athwart the forehead of an autumn noon—  
Then would I die and ask no better boon !

## IN OLD AGE

AH, what is beauty to the sick man's eye ?  
Unto the spirit wintry with despair  
The promise of the spring ? The azure air,  
The winged pomp of Heaven passing by  
Into the topmost summer's golden sky ?  
The west-wind breathing in my face is young  
As once I was, when in my heart there sprung  
Primrose and violet joys that soonest die.  
Therefore I think upon my days of prime,  
Unfailing strength, unquenchable delight,  
The voices that I heard in that far time,  
Of love and truth, the eyes that once were  
    bright,  
And the long vision of the past appears  
One summer morn, a morn of merry years.

## THE POET AND FOUNT OF HAPPINESS

THERE is a fountain to whose flowery side  
By divers ways the children of the earth  
Come day and night athirst, to measure forth  
Its living waters—Health and Wealth and  
Pride,

Power clad in arms and Wisdom argus-eyed :  
But one apart from all is seen to stand,  
And take up in the hollow of his hand  
What to their golden vessels is denied,  
Baffling their utmost reach. He, born and  
nurst

In the glad sound and freshness of that place,  
Drinks momentarily its dews, and feels no thirst ;  
While, from his bowered grot or sunny space,  
He sorrows for that troop, as it returns  
Thro' the waste wilderness with empty urns.



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